173 643 days of the oncoming of the Turk. Lek fought on the side of Venice, and when Scutari fell in 1472 he and many refugees fled to Italy along with the Venetians. But when Sultan Mahommed II died in 1481 and his sons fought for the throne, Turkish rule in Europe was in a critical state. The Serbs, however, helped to re-establish it by fighting on behalf of one of the claimants. During the confusion Lek Dukagin returned to his homelands, as did also Ivan Tzrnojevitch, the founder of Montenegro. Ivan became a vassal of the Turks, and is known to this day in Montenegro by his Turkish title, Ivan Beg. Lek Dukagin is not recorded to have done so. That he ruled as he pleased in the mountains is shown by his great fame there. It is said that in 1464 Pope Paul II had excommunicated him for his most un-Christian code.

[688] Of the descendants of the Dukagini two are recorded as turning Moslem. Some settled in Venice—a "Luca Ducagini Duca di Pulato e dell stato Ducagini" is recorded in Venice in 1506. The Bib Doda family, who, until the Great War, were the hereditary chiefs of Mirdita, claimed descent from the Dukagini, but could give no definite pedigree. The tribe Bijelopavlitch in Montenegro traces descent from Paul i Bardh (Paul the White), brother or nephew of Lek.

671 681 174 Though Lek enforced the Canon, it so much resembles tribe law of other lands that we cannot believe he originated it in the fifteenth century. What he evidently strove to do was to check crime by inflicting certain punishments. That—as the tribesmen always declared—he both ordered the taking of blood and fixed a punishment for so doing, is incredible. He probably modified and added to existing law and strictly enforced it.

This is the Canon so far as I know it. Dom Kol Ashti, the very worthy priest of Shkreli, gave me many facts. Others I learnt from Mgr. Miédia, now Archbishop of Scutari. Much I picked up in my travels, and by comparing all have compiled the following account. In Maltsia e Madhe the Canon was much modified. Among the Dukagini it was in more primitive form. The Turkish Government had somewhat modified it; but everywhere it emphasized the tribe. The tribe has jurisdiction only within its lands.

MURDER WITHIN THE TRIBE

682 Murder may be the result of a quarrel or it may be a blood-feud, the cause of which is more or less remote. In either case the man who [574] has taken blood flies at once to a safe place outside the tribe. Any house is bound to give him hospitality. In the case of a feud, he is regarded as a most unfortunate man who has but done his duty. He [609] at once proclaims his deed. The headmen of his tribe then meet and

533 How beautiful is the bride, Mashallah, Mashallah.
585 She has a forehead for a "perishan" (gold ornament of coins, etc.).
Her eyebrows are like braid, Mashallah, etc.
Her eyes large as coffee cups, Mashallah, etc.
Her nose is like a gold coin ("muskala").
Her cheeks like sweet cake ("gurabi," given at night by the bride to the bridegroom).
Her mouth is like a casket, Mashallah, etc.
Her teeth like pearls.
Her neck like a lily. Her figure is like a standard

585 sang the ladies, the men roaring: "She is, she is!" in a high falsetto, pressing their hands on their ears, and the small boys yelling "Mashallah," a strange cry at a Catholic wedding. All the time her two attendants [152] patted, straightened, and wiped the bride. My neighbour whispered to me: "They often faint." I anxiously watched her panting and swaying, and was relieved when the bridegroom left the room and the men followed. The ladies then bent the bride's knees and she plopped on to the chair. By now she was almost hypnotized, and mechanically at intervals tried to rise, but was at once replaced unless a child came in, when it was correct for her to rise for a moment. Then came midday and the wedding dinner, to which I did not stay. The bride is allowed to withdraw for a time. She does not eat with the guests. Her attendants [244] put little bits of food into her mouth. If very modest she does not take it, but when left alone secretly consumes some food she has hidden in her marriage coffer. On my return she was again enthroned. I was given three tumblers of wine and a dish of sweets and told to consume them, and did my best. I was then given a special view of all the bride's ornaments, and invited to return at night for the final ceremony. This I did not do. It was described as follows: The two attendants prepare the bed at midnight. They undress the bride and put a long silk shirt on her; lay her forcibly on the bed, and withdraw. The two male [833 witnesses then lead or drag in the bridegroom and prepare him. The 533] wedding guests all stand outside the door when the couple are left alone, and sing epithalamia of an encouraging nature and shout advice through the keyhole. The bride has to feed the bridegroom with the "gurabi" (cake) she has brought in her wedding coffer.

The company sings continually till told the marriage has been consummated. In a short time the bride and bridegroom emerge completely redressed. She wears a married woman's dress. They are greeted as man and wife and at last left in peace.

585 The whole of the next week the bride may be visited at any hour
574 of the day and must not speak a word, but sit rigid as before.

At the end of the week she has a holiday and goes back to her own people on the Sunday. On the Wednesday her husband is invited to

make acquaintance with the family into which he has married. Again 585
the party is divided into "buck-herds and doe-herds." The husband 574
enters the ladies' room and embraces all of his new female relations,
except his wife, whom modesty compels to turn away. He sups with [576]
the family and goes home alone. Next day the bride is brought back
to his house and the same pantomime of extreme reluctance is gone
through. She comes home usually in a carriage. I was told that formerly
it was etiquette for her to come on foot, but only inch by inch, so that
her return from a house round the corner might perhaps take hours.
She visits her family thus at week-ends for several months, but only
on the first occasion is a carriage and ceremony necessary.

A bridegroom, while I was in Scutari, revolted against the midnight
ceremony, and turned all the guests out of his house after the feast.
In spite of her assumed modesty the bride was deeply hurt at being
thus deprived of publicity. She complained to her parents, who angrily
asked why their daughter should have been thus insulted. Was she
not good enough to show as his wife to his friends in the usual manner?
Nor could they see that in this case the bridegroom's modesty had
been real and not assumed.

He was in the unusual position of having a house of his own. In most 591
cases the young couple lives in the house of the bridegroom's parents 592
in the town and has a separate room. The parents rule and control
the household, and the bride is often very hard-worked. The emigrants
returned from America have brought new ideas and the system is
breaking down.

Much of the above ceremony resembles Roman practice. The distaff,
the casket of household implements, the throwing of sweets, sprinkling
of water, epithalamia, the *patria potestas* also.

The girls of a family must be married according to age—the eldest 582
first, and so on. The origin of this is perhaps that formerly infant
betrothals were almost universal and girls were sent to their husbands
so soon as old enough.

In Scutari, and, I believe, in the other towns, the daughters, or at
least one of them, must be married before the sons can be married.
The explanation offered was that the daughters must be dowered,
and the sons cannot marry till they have helped earn the dowries.
Over these wedding outfits the parties are very exacting. The bride- 583
groom's family bargains for every stitch of the garments and stipulates
as to their quality. While I was in Scutari a betrothed man, who had
always worn Albanian costume, went to work abroad and dressed
à la Franga. He wrote home to say he now required drawers that
could be worn under trousers, and his fiancée, who had already finished
I forget how many dozen voluminous Albanian garments, had all her

ALBANIA YESTERDAY AND TODAY

712 Albania is also a seat of historic interest having been the battle ground for many wars with the Greeks and the Turks. The national hero of Albania—Scanderbeg the Great—lived in Kruja, where, as a silent testimonial to this great hero's strength, are the remains of the old fortress. It looms directly above the town on a cliff, and the old Tower and lower massive walls still stand. If these old stones could speak, what a story they could tell of the Albanian struggle and strife against the invader! Throughout the country many strategic points are heavily fortified and many watch towers raise their white heads on mountain tops.

574 The Albanians are by far the most hospitable people in Southeastern Europe. Their doors are never closed and a friend cannot ask too much. They are charmingly naive in their manners and delightfully quaint in their cus-
461 toms. There is nothing of the hurried, hysterical existence in Albania; the natives are leisurely and get the full benefit out of their
493 sunny, mellow days. The city man is aware of a pleasant surprise at the lack of the constant blare of the motor horn; the peaceful serenity of the golden days is only broken by the occasional honk of the droschka and the cries of the street vendors.

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the Law, an unjustifiable murder, since he should have killed the father who was the abductor. Therefore the father waited on the trail above Shoshi and shot the husband.

"It should have stopped there, but Shoshi's honor is involved as long as a woman of the tribe is held unlawfully in the hands of Shala. So a hot-tempered Shoshi man has shot a man of Shala and it has become a blood feud between the two tribes. As the woman was born in Pultit, some say that Pultit's honor is also involved. So you see that the affair becomes complicated; I have been told by wise men that no less than sixteen deaths will wipe out the insults on both sides. You perhaps heard telephoning about it as you came in? The mountain sides have been ringing with it. But what can one do? Excommunication, of course. At every mass I tell my people that the anger of the Church will descend on all who take part in the killings, but the Law of Lec holds them, and it is, after all, their only civil law."

It took time to tell this, what with filling the glasses, serving the food platters of delicious stewed rabbit and bowls of macaroni, a dish the bishop had grown fond of in Rome—and then there were the cups of syrupy Turkish coffee to be ceremoniously served and drunk, and for hours, struggling with an agony of sleepiness, we had implored Perolli in English to make our excuses and let us go to bed, he refusing sternly, since it is the most terrible breach of mountain hospitality for a guest to grow sleepy at early at midnight,

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CHAPTER IV

WELCOME TO THE HOUSE OF MARKE GJONNI—WE HEAR THE VOICE OF AN OREAD—A GUARDIAN SPIRIT OF THE TRAILS.

574 CONCEALED by the darkness, we lay back in our wet clothes on the wet rocks and shook with smothered laughter. How Albanian! While Perolli with a hundred honeyed words made excuses for the feebleness of foreign women, already weary with only sixteen miles of mountain climbing. He was still explaining when up the trail came the flare of a torch, and an Albanian boy of perhaps fourteen years appeared, a turban on his head, a rifle on his back, and a silver-hilted knife stuck through his orange sash.

"May you live long!" said he.

"May you live long!" said we.

"How could you?" He meant, "How could you get here?"

"Slowly, slowly, little by little," we replied.

"Are you a man?" said Perolli.

"I am a man of Pultit, of the village of Plani, of the house of Marke Gjonni," said the boy. "In our house there is always a welcome for the stranger. The door of the house of Marke Gjonni is open to you."

"Glory to your lips and to your feet," said

PEAKS OF SHALA

Perolli, and to us in English: "His father has sent him to ask us to come to his house. What do you think?" 574 •

"Is anyone going to think?" we cried. "There'll be a fire, won't there?"

We followed the boy up the mountain side, our lungs sobbing and our feet slipping on the trail dimly lighted by the torch, and so steep that the palms of our hands were bruised by climbing it. Out of the ceaseless swishing murmur of falling water that had surrounded us all day one note rose above the rest; flying spray was like a mist on our faces; we were following the edge of a waterfall hidden by the dark. Then the trail turned; we stood on a level ledge; and suddenly all the rifles in the world seemed to go off not ten feet away. 574 576

"It's all right!" Perolli's shout came up from the darkness beneath our feet. "They're only welcoming you!" But I have never felt so defenseless, so nakedly exposed to sudden death, as I did standing there, clutching Frances and Alex, while sharp flashes darted out of the blackness and deafening explosions contended with more deafening echoes. All the household of Marke Gjonni stood on the trail, every man firing his rifle until it was empty. Then a woman appeared with a torch, her beautiful face and two heavy braids of hair painted on the darkness like a Rembrandt, if Rembrandt had ever used a model from ancient Greece, and we made our way through a jumble of greetings ("May you

574 live long! May you live long!" we repeated),
[576] and up a flight of stone steps along the side of a blank stone wall, and through a low, arched stone doorway.

The stone-walled room was large—as large as the house itself—and low ceilinged, and filled with shadows. Near the farther end, on the stone floor, a bonfire burned in a ring of ashes. In the corner near the door several goats and two kids and two sheep stopped their browsing on a heap of dry-leaved branches, and looked at us with large eyes shining in the torchlight. Five or six women came out of the shadows to greet us, and behind us the men were coming in, reloading their rifles, hanging them on pegs, closing and bolting the heavy wooden door.

Rexh and our two gendarmes were already busy unrolling the packs, spreading our blankets over heaps of dried grass on the other side of the fire. In a moment we were sitting comfortably on them, extending wet feet toward the flames, while one of our hosts put a fresh armful of brush on the coals, another hacked slivers of pitch pine from a great knot of it and set them blazing in a small wrought-iron basket that hung from the ceiling, and another, with hollowed-out wooden bowls of coffee, of sugar, and of water around him, began making Turkish coffee in a tiny, long-handled iron bowl set in the hot ashes.

"We're going to have a night in a native house, after all," said I, happily, and added, starting, "What's that?" A long, thin, curiously un-

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earthly sound—hardly a wail, though that is the dearest word I have for it—was abroad in the night that surrounded the stone house. Even the shadows seemed to crouch a little nearer the fire, hearing it, and when it ceased the splashing of the waterfall was louder in the stillness. Then the man with the coffee pot pushed it farther among the coals, and with the little grating noise the movement of the household recovered and went on.

"Are you a man?" said our host, courteously, turning his clear dark eyes on Perolli, and Perolli, silencing me with a glance, folded his arms more comfortably around his drawn-up knees and began the proper conversation of a guest.

By degrees the house of Marke Gjonni grew clearer to our eyes; they became accustomed to the firelight and the shadows and saw the guns hanging on the wall, the browsing goats that, with a little tinkling of bells, worried and tore at the dried green leaves on the oak branches heaped for them, the outlines of a painted wooden chest filled with corn meal, at which a woman worked making a loaf of bread on a flat board. One of the men raked out some coals and set in them a round flat iron pan on legs—the cross and the sun circle were wrought on its bottom. In the midst of the flames he laid its cover to heat. Soon the woman came with the bread, a loaf two feet across and two inches thick, and deftly slid it from the board into the pan, which it exactly fitted; one of the children put the cover over it and buried all in hot ashes.

PEAKS OF SHALA

000 "We'd be saying: 'Run away and play, dear. This isn't for children,'" I commented.

"We wouldn't," said Frances. "They'd have been in bed six hours ago. How on earth do they live to grow up?"

"Heaven knows. But aren't they strong and beautiful when they do!"

"It's all right," said Perolli, aside. "They're talking about the French—whether France will become enough afraid of Jugo-Slavia to side with Italy down here. They aren't for or against the Tirana government; they don't exactly understand it, but they're waiting to find out. They don't know who I am. Don't be worried."

And at last dinner appeared. It was exactly half past two in the morning.

Most of the children—they had had no supper at all, so far as we could determine—were going to sleep, collapsing in soft little heaps where they sat beside the fire. Various women of the household lifted them tenderly, carried them to the farther corner of the house, near the goats, and laid them in a row on the floor. There, covered head and foot with heavy, tucked-in blankets, they continued to sleep.

264 574 Meantime the table was brought for us.[7] It was a large round piece of wood, raised on little legs perhaps five inches from the floor. We sat about it, comfortably cross-legged on our blankets, and before each of us was laid a large chunk of corn bread broken from the flat loaf. In the

7 [At Marke Gjonni's house. For detailed account of visit, see [80] cat. 116, pp. 54-86 -- Analyst]

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center of the table was set a wooden bowl filled with pieces of pork. 264 574

"Don't!" said Perolli, quickly, restraining our famished gestures. "In Albania it is not good manners to be eager to eat." So we sat wretched for some moments, savoring the delicious odor of food that we must not touch, and politely making conversation with our hosts, who still sprawled in graceful attitudes about the fire. Then, with slow and indifferent movements, we fished out bits of the meat with our fingers, and ate.

It was delicious, the lean meat, stripped of every scrap of fat and broiled on sticks over a wood fire. We ate eagerly, biting first the meat, then a morsel of corn bread, coarse, made without leavening, but sweet and nutty. The smallest crumb of it must not be scattered on table or floor; when one fell, Perolli instructed us to pick it up and kiss it. We should also have made the sign of the cross, for bread is sacred in these mountains. Since we were not Catholics, that omission might be overlooked. But we must pick up the crumb and kiss it; to have ignored it would have been scandal.

"In Albania," said Perolli, "it is etiquette to leave a great deal of the food." And while we were still starving, after fourteen hours of hunger, he ordered the dish away.

After that, another wooden bowl filled with cubes of the fat pork, fried crisp. Rexh[1] sitting a little apart, soberly ate his piece of corn bread,

[1] A Mohammedan boy -- [81] Analyst

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for not even in the next village had the messenger been able to find eggs or goat's meat.

When this second course was removed, fresh water was again brought to wash our hands, while the table was removed to a little distance. Then I saw why it was courteous to leave food, for all the villagers who had come in to see us gathered around this second table. And when they had finished and all had washed their hands —it was now past three in the morning—the table was again moved, and the family ate, men and women together, chatting and daintily dipping into the common dish.

"Do you think, Perolli," said Frances, "that we could go to bed now?" And she looked enviously at Alex, who sat stony eyed, upright, and fast asleep.

"Oh, surely!" said Perolli. "They'll understand that you're tired." And he explained this to our hosts, who nodded, smiling. So Cheremi and Rexh spread our blankets more smoothly on the floor, and we lay down in a row, our heads on our saddlebags, and pulled another blanket over us.

For a time the others sat by the fire and talked; one roasted coffee over the coals in a long-handled pan, and then ground it in a cylinder of brass. The warm brown smell of it and the sound of grinding kept coming through my daze of fatigue. Then one by one they lay down, covering their heads with blankets; the fire died to a fading glow of coals; there was no sound

000 this, too," she added, in a tone of surprise, as though she saw the house for the first time.

It was slightly different from the house of Marke Gjonni. The end where the goats were eating was shut off from the rest by a lattice-work of woven willow boughs, and high against the wall where we sat by the fire an inclosed platform of the same latticework hung like a huge bird's nest. It was reached by the stairway Alex had remarked—simply a slanting log, notched roughly into steps. Above the fire itself was another square of the interlaced branches, hung from the ceiling; the smoke rose and curled against it and made long velvety fringes of soot, and all around its edges were wooden pegs on which our coats were hung to dry and haunches of goat's meat were hung to smoke. From one of the pegs swung the basket of wrought iron holding slivers of blazing pitch pine; this was the lamp.

"Eighth century," I repeated, vaguely. "So we are living in the eighth century."

"Or earlier. Oh yes, surely earlier, for the house I saw must have been one of the last of its kind in Norway," said Alex. But we said no more about it, for centuries seemed unimportant then, and, indeed, we did not remember very clearly any newer ways of living; we were too comfortable where we were, like people coming home after a very short journey.

574 Perhaps ten men of the village had come in to see us; several older and more dignified ones

[At house in Albanian moun-[102] tains -- Amlyst]

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whom we took to be chiefs, and some young ones, 574
and half a dozen boys, all moving gracefully as panthers, their white garments ghostly in the gloom, and each swinging his rifle from his shoulder and hanging it on a peg near the door before he settled himself near the fire, where the quivering light flickered over silver chains, bright sashes, and colored turbans. Their large brown eyes regarded us with serious friendliness; when they turned their heads their profiles were sharp and fine against the darkness; and their hands were slender, firmly molded, aristocratic.

A small kid was brought for our inspection; we were to eat it for dinner. It looked at us mildly, contented in the arm that held it comfortably; its fur was soft as sealskin. One of the children rose and smilingly kissed its delicate muzzle, with a gesture of charming affection. Then they took it out and killed it, bringing back its skin, which they hung on a peg. After a time the mother goat came over and nuzzled that skin thoughtfully.

Then they brought us a lamb, all woolly white with youth, and we praised that, and they took it out and killed it. Its skin hung beside that of the kid. And after that they showed us a fat hen, and it also was so used to the companionship of humans that it uttered no faintest squawk when the woman who held it nonchalantly wrung its neck, just beyond the circle of firelight.

After that our host handed over the making of coffee to one of the village men and went out

574 to help his wife cook the dinner; there was a built-up place of stone outside where the cooking fire was made. All this time we had been talking, making the courteous speeches that accompany coffee drinking, and exchanging cigarettes.

One of the empty cigarette boxes—the little, ten-cigarette, tin-foil-lined ones—I handed to a little boy, perhaps four years old. He took it gravely, thanking me like a man, and retired to look at it. But hardly had he opened the flap when I saw the hand of a chief come over the boy's shoulder and quietly take the box. The boy gave it up, not even a shade of discontent on his face, and it passed slowly from hand to hand, was inspected, marveled at, discussed. The cunningness of the folding, the beautiful design of printing and picture, the delicacy of the tissue paper that had been around the cigarettes, the pliability of the tin foil, of metal, and yet so thin, engrossed them all. When they had satisfied their curiosity and admiration, it went back to the boy, who took it with his hand on his heart, bowed, and sat for a long time looking at it.

"Have you ever seen such perfect courtesy?" said, I, marveling. "And from such a baby!"

Perolli looked at me in amazement. "Why, what's strange about it?" he asked.

423 Undoubtedly we were among the most cour-
578 teous people in the world, I thought, but the next moment that idea was completely upset,

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cities where the men of Thethis have always gone to market; the grazing lands where they have always fed their sheep lie in the grasp of Serbian armies. Scutari, the nearest free Albanian market place, is a hundred miles away across two mountain ranges. Therefore it was said that Thethis was friendly to the Serbs; it was said that her men still went to market in the Albanian cities that are now clutched by Serbia, that spies came and went across the border, that the chiefs listened to the clink of Serbian gold. And Alex and I remembered that in Thethis we were not to address Rrok Perolli, secretary of the Albanian Minister of the Interior, by his real name.

But he was behind us on the trail, doubtless still engaged in trying to get breakfast for Frances in the house we had left, and we went forward with easy minds to meet Padre Marjan. He came barefooted and bareheaded across the fields to welcome us, a thin, ascetic-looking man in the brown robes of the Franciscan friar. Large brown eyes burned in his face that seemed made of bones and stretched skin, the grasp of his thin hand was hot and nervous. He spoke to us in Albanian, Italian, and German, ushering us with apologies into the bleak rooms above the church.

The Serbians and Montenegrins, in their drive down toward Scutari, had looted the church, he said. He had come into Thethis two months ago, and found not even a wooden stool left. He was doing his best, but it took time ——

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The rickety broken stairway led upward to a long hall; from this, a door let us into the living room. It was bare; rain-stained wooden walls and a floor that clattered beneath our feet. The one window was shattered; fragments of glass held together by pasted paper. There were a long wooden table and a bench, nothing more. No fire. Our soaked garments were suddenly cold on us, and a chill entered our very bones.

The only fire in the house, he said, was in the kitchen. We begged him to take us to it, and in a moment we were sitting on a bench before a crackling fire in a big stone fireplace. The tiny room was crowded with villagers, the floor was muddy with their trampling, and more arrived every moment. Padre Marjan had no servant, but all were eager to help him. Some took off our shoes, others heated water over the fire, a handsome youth who looked Serbian and talked German anxiously beat eggs and sugar together while Padre Marjan made coffee. The warmth and the genuine welcome they all gave thawed us and made us happy, and we sat drinking the heartening mixture of eggs and coffee, while clouds of steam rose from us all and a babble of talk went on.

One tall, handsome chief—Lulash, his name was, and beyond doubt he was the handsomest man we had yet seen—brought us a lamb as a gift. Dripping beside him stood a ragged boy, barefooted and blue with chill, who had come down the valley to bring us three eggs, which he

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carried tied around his waist in a pouch of goat's skin. He put them carefully into our hands, and we tried to return the gift with some pieces of hoarded candy. But he gazed in dismay at the strange things, and nothing would persuade him to taste them. A colored handkerchief, however, was accepted in an ecstasy that made him dumb; he could only lay it upon his heart and touch our hands to his forehead. Another chief came with a fat hen, others with eggs; all were eager to roll cigarettes for us, all were smiling, and in a hundred beautiful phrases they overwhelmed us with thanks for our coming, for our presence, for the school that Alex and Frances had promised Thethis. For this was to be the first of the mountain schools, and Alex, who had come into the mountains to decide where to put the other two, was delighted to learn that already, before the school building was begun, Padre Marjan had started the school, and Lulash had promised a hundred trees to be burned to make lime for the building.

We sat talking of these things while Padre Marjan set pots of soup to boiling in the fireplace, broke eggs, unlocked his box of precious flour, busied himself with all preparations for dinner, climbing over and around the tangle of lounging bodies, until another outbreak of echoing noises announced the arrival of Frances and Perolli and Rexh and our men with the packs. We felt a little tension with Perolli's arrival, seeing the keen eyes of the men fixed on his English

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609 S74 clothes and swarthy, intelligent face. He is as tall as most Europeans, but he was small among those giants, and the neat leather-holstered revolver and dagger that hung from his belt looked inadequate among all those long, bristling rifles.

But Padre Marjan, unaware of our apprehensions, was altogether the happy welcoming host. He greeted the dripping Frances warmly, anxious only to make her comfortable—she who was also responsible for the hope of a school in Thethis. He welcomed Perolli also, calling him by his first name. "How does he know that Perolli's name is Rrok?" we girls asked one another with startled eyes—and then, turning to the chiefs with a radiant smile, "This guest," said Padre Marjan, with pleasure, "is Rrok Perolli, the secretary of the Minister of the Interior in Tirana."

000 You read of such things calmly. Nothing that one reads is real to him. Therefore you can never know what Padre Marjan's innocent words meant to us as he spoke them in his crowded kitchen in Thethis, at the headwaters of the Lumi Shala, a hundred miles and twenty centuries from anything you know.

The wildness, the savagery and isolation of those mountains seemed to come into the room. A hundred miles to Scutari, a hundred miles of almost impassable mountains between us and any kind of help. There we were, three girls and a boy, alone in the narrow valley beneath the eyes of the Serbs, the Serbs who six months

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embroidery. These were really separate linings to the stiff and hard opangi, which had to be soaked a long time in water and put on wet, in order to get them on at all.

Very conscious of my feet, which seemed large and unwieldy flopping objects at the ends of my legs, I went across the flat, wet fields with Perolli to drink coffee in the house of Lulash.

The house of Lulash was different from any of the others we had seen. It stood on a castlelike rock; we went up to it by a stairway cut in the side of a cliff that rose almost sheer for so far that the waterfall pouring down it looked like a motionless streak of snow near the top. A natural bridge of rock crossed the little space between the cliff and the rock on which the house of Lulash was built; a furious little stream roared beneath us as we crossed the bridge, and then there was another stairway leading up to the house.

Lulash and a dozen men and women of his household stood outside his door to receive us. No rifles were fired. We passed through a double line of salutes and greetings and into a high-arched stone doorway. There was a little hall, floored and walled with stone, and a massive stone stair leading upward. This we climbed, and were in a large whitewashed room, lighted by a window and furnished with beautifully painted chests and a few hand-woven rugs. But this was not the only room; there were others, and, leading us through several arched stone

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empty coffee cup to Sadiri Luka, saying, "*Per te mire* (All good to you)," and rose. He would not stay to share the food which the women were even then bringing, for there was a sick man in upper Thethis, too ill to come to confession, who had sent, begging the padre to come to him. The sick man's son waited for him at the door, and two chiefs laced his opangi, gave him his staff, and went with him a little way on the trail.

574 It was midafternoon, and since early morning 264 the women had been preparing the feast they offered us.[1] A special dispensation had been asked, and granted by Padre Marjan, for that feast, for though this was Lent, we were not Catholics, and never before had Americans been guests in upper Thethis. Far and wide the rumor had gone that in our own tribe we were daughters of chiefs, and it was with apologies that the village offered us its best.

When we had washed our hands in water poured from a silver pitcher, and dried them on a towel of white silk, a large brass tray was set on four midget legs in the midst of our cushions, and the other guests withdrew to places near the walls. Much urging persuaded Sadiri Luka to sit with us and share such parts of the feast as did not break the Lenten fast. Newly made wooden spoons were given us, and a silver bowl of hot chicken broth was set in the center of the tray.

829 Sadiri Luka spoke little, but his remarks were sound and well considered. While our spoons

1 [At house of Sadiri Luka, [190] wealthy man of upper Thethis -- Ana]

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Shaqir, and Veli. Halit was a young Mati chieftain and spoke French; a big-boned, blond fellow, he was brave as a lion, possessed of boundless energy, and, which was rare among Albanians, knew how to make others work. Shaqir was a schoolmaster from Shengyerg, rather euphemistically surnamed "the Bold", and spoke some English; he was the jester of the company and, through his brother, organised our courier system with Tirana. Veli was a Tosk and had for several years been orderly to General Percy, the Inspector-General of the Albanian gendarmerie. He spoke quite good English and in his well-kept battledress looked just like an English soldier. We employed besides a score of Albanians who served us as bodyguards and mulemen. Among them was one Arslan, who guarded Smiley, but was in normal times a village *hoja*.

The defence of our base was entrusted to the Zogist villagers of Ziber and Bastar, who undertook to mount a guard each night for our protection. In practice they often failed even to post sentries; but, since the only paths leading to our camp ran through their villages, we might reasonably hope to receive some warning of the approach of an enemy.

5

We were still busy with details of organisation when, as arranged at Derye, a young Zogist officer came with a small escort to conduct me to Abas Kupi. We rode all afternoon through forests of beech and pine, broken by broad stretches of barren scree. Darkness overtook us just as we crossed the range into the Shupal valley, but the moon rose early, and we pushed on until towards midnight we reached the straggling village of Bruz. There I was welcomed by Abas Kupi's eighteen-year-old son, Petrit, who held the place with a small force of Zogists. His father was still an hour's march away; and seeing that it was late, Petrit suggested that I should spend the night as his guest. I accepted gladly, for I had been eight hours in the saddle; and he led the way into a low, single-

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574 storied house, where a score of Zogist guerillas were gathered
[342] round the fire. The room was filled with smoke — for the house had no chimney, like many in Albania — and it was several minutes before I could see or breathe in comfort. I sat down, however, by the hearth, where a carpet had been spread, and while the evening meal was made ready had some talk with Petrit. He spoke quite good French, having studied in the French *lycée* at Korcha, where, by a strange irony, Enver Hoja had been his teacher. He was obviously eager for news of the outside world, and the flow of his questions was only restrained by his sense of courtesy as my host. In appearance he was not unlike his father, though of sturdier build and more slothful movements; and I was told that he had already distinguished himself in the previous autumn's fighting. He was possessed besides of a natural authority, and, despite his youth, seemed to command the respect of the wild mountaineers who accompanied him. Some of these spoke a little Italian or Serb, and their discussions that night gave me a first impression of
[521] Zogist public opinion. The Ghegs are not great talkers like the Greeks or Slavs, but I felt, from what they said, that they were rather suspicious of British intentions and far more concerned with preventing the spread of Communism in Albania than with fighting the Germans. Towards one o'clock
[262] our conversation was interrupted by the arrival of the evening meal of soup, boiled mutton and cheese. We ate in silence
[513] and as soon as we had finished I retired to rest on one of the mattresses which the master of the house had spread for us on the floor.

342 Next day, in the afternoon, Petrit accompanied me to the place where Abas Kupi had made his temporary headquarters. It was a grey stone keep, built on a jutting rib of the mountain range and approached by a path so narrow and precipitous that I had to send back my horse and make the last stage of the journey on foot. Abas Kupi came out to meet me, as I turned
[516] into the walled courtyard of the house, and welcomed me with the traditional greeting of "*Tungjatjeta*" — "May your life be prolonged". He led the way up a flight of wooden steps, resting like a ladder against the wall of the house, and took

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me by the hand into a dark and dusty room, hung with rifles and submachine-guns. It was thronged with Zogist notables and their bodyguards: wild and rugged men, corrugated with cartridge-belts, and festooned with pistols, daggers, and hand-grenades. Most of them were dressed in black, baggy Turkish breeches, braided homespun jackets of black or brown, with multicoloured sashes wound about their waists, and white fezes or skull-caps on their heads. A few besides were in uniform retained from the time of their service in the Albanian army, or looted from the Italians; while others, especially the leaders, wore tweed or leather jackets, variously combined with local or military costume.

We sat down, Turkish fashion, by the fire; and, while we drank coffee and exchanged greetings, the guerillas milled around, or sat together in small groups, whispering intently. To a stranger this whispering seemed sinister and blatantly conspiratorial, but the others took no offence at it. Necessity indeed imposed a communal way of life on the guerillas; each man was watched by his fellows in his every movement, and it was only by whispering that any privacy of discussion could be preserved.

I had been there perhaps half an hour when, at a sign from Abas Kupi, the guerillas filed out of the room, and we remained alone with Shaqir, my interpreter, and Colonel Murad Basha. Basha had been a regular officer under King Zog and had joined Abas Kupi in Belgrade in 1940. He was now the Zogist Chief-of-Staff, but struck me from the first as pedantic and too quick to see the difficulties in any scheme. He was indeed to prove a defeatist influence at the Zogist Headquarters, for, though personally no coward, he was terrified of action, like so many senior officers who have won their spurs on the square rather than in the field.

I began our discussions by showing Abas Kupi my credentials: these were a letter from Stirling, who had been his friend, and a *besa* given me by King Zog. This was a covenant enjoining upon all Albanians the duty of protecting my life and, should their zeal prove unavailing, of avenging my death. My *bona fides* thus established I recalled our meeting in Belgrade

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Their houses[1] varied in size and architecture with the wealth of the owners; but all were essentially built for defence. As a rule, they were so situated as to command a good field of fire over their chief approaches, and were often surrounded by walled courtyards entered through heavy, wooden gates studded with iron. For the most part they were of wood and stone, sometimes whitewashed, and consisted of two stories, joined by a narrow indoor staircase, or by a flight of wooden steps on the outside. The ground floor was the cattle and the women's quarters; above was the guest-room. This guest-room was the centre of the life of the house, and, except for a stout chest in which the valuables of the family were stored, was altogether empty of furniture. At one end of it was the open hearth from which the smoke escaped through chinks in the wall or, in statelier mansions, through a chimney. Narrow windows, usually without panes, served as a means of ventilation or, on occasion, as rifle slits; but so dim was the light which they diffused that it was often difficult to read indoors, even at midday. At night the room would be lit by the glow of the fire, or sometimes by oil lamps or pinewood torches.

On entering a house we[2] would take off our boots and give up our rifles to the host, though retaining our side arms. As foreigners, we would then be led to the place of honour, which is on the right-hand side of the hearth, next to the wall. Abas Kupi would sit with us, or take the left-hand side, and the rest of the company, including bodyguards and orderlies, assembled in a horse shoe round the fire. The youngest sat at the apex of the horse shoe, and, since there were often a score of us, the evening would begin with much show of "Friend go up higher". We sat on carpets or sheepskin rugs, cross-legged or reclining against our saddle-bags. When all were seated, the host rolled cigarettes, which only non-smokers might refuse, and tossed them with unfailing accuracy to each guest. Presently a warm drink would be served, usually coffee, though in the poorer houses sweetened or salted milk was often brought instead. As outlaws we sought to keep our movements secret and our arrival was, as a rule, the first warning of our visit which the host received. Custom demanded that he serve us

[1] [i.e. in the Mati valley -- Analyst]

[2] [British liaison officers in early 1944 -- Analyst]

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576 574 meat, and, since several hours might pass before the sheep or kid had been killed and made ready, it was often past midnight before we had eaten.

While the meal was cooking we variously slept or talked and let the bodyguards dry damp clothes by the fire or massage our weary limbs. Sometimes, to beguile the time, one of the [533] company would recite from the long epic poems in which the Albanians record the exploits of their heroes. They were weird, monotonous laments, sung in a high-pitched nasal voice to the accompaniment of a one-stringed mandolin. An hour [273] or so before the meal was served flasks of *raki* would be brought, accompanied by *mese* of onions, cheese, and sometimes hard-boiled eggs or lumps of grilled meat. *Raki* is a fiery, colourless spirit, made from the pulp of grapes, or sometimes, like *slivovitz*, from plums. Among the mountaineers it was usually home-brewed, and varied greatly in quality and strength. The principal guests would each receive a small flask, the shape of an old-fashioned burgundy flagon, and holding perhaps half a pint, while the rest of the company fared according to the resources of the host, sharing a flask between two or three. Toasts were drunk to the traditional greeting of " *Tungjatjeta* " — " May your life be prolonged " ; and, though the mountaineers habitually drank to excess, they seldom failed to comport themselves with grave, if sometimes mellowed, dignity.

When the cooking was done Maclean, as the chief guest, would be asked if the meal might be served ; there was never [521] conversation after meals, and so the greatest compliment which he could pay his host and fellows was to ask for a postponement. 264 As soon, however, as he had given his assent, a circular wooden table some five feet in diameter would be carried in, standing about six inches from the ground. Round this a dozen of us would assemble, sitting cross-legged, but in a crocodile, each sideways on to the table so as to make room for as many as possible. We would then each be given a spoon as our sole piece of cutlery and with this helped ourselves to the more liquid dishes at the centre of the table. There were no plates, so that each spoon plied steadily backwards and forwards

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Women among the clans were but the slaves and chattels of their men. In the mountains they went unveiled but almost all were prematurely aged by manual labour and child-bearing. Sometimes we saw one hurrying across a courtyard or peering up at us from the kitchen fire; otherwise they had no part in our lives.

Social distinctions among the guerillas were subtle and changing; the chieftains and their sons were treated with respect but never with servility; and the bodyguards sometimes as poor relations but always as members of the same family. They ate and slept together, and, in so far as he could, the host provided alike for all. Luxuries in the mountains were inevitably scarce, but, if the choicest morsels went to the *Beys* and elders, the rest received their portion until the whole was finished. The Ghegs indeed regard hospitality as a sacred duty enjoined upon the host, never as a favour conferred upon the guest. To give of his best was a point of honour, and a tribesman would kill his last ewe lamb, or even his milch goat, rather than fail to set meat before the meanest of his guests. In the days of slavery Albanians had been known to sell their wives or children to feast a stranger; and one story which I heard illustrates the extent of their honourable, if quixotic, liberality. In the repression which followed the rising of the Scutari clans early in the last century the bravest of the insurgent leaders, a Catholic chieftain, was captured and brought before the Turkish governor. The Pasha gave the order to cut off his head but, as the proud Albanian knelt to receive the fatal stroke, the Turk was moved by a dark and sudden curiosity:

"You are a brave man," he said. "Tell me, have you ever known a worse moment than this?"

The Albanian looked up and answered gravely: "Only once; when a stranger came to my house and I had not even bread to set before him."

For the sake of the answer, his life was spared.

We spent several days among the men of Mati, resting in sunlit orchards, or cool, whitewashed rooms, or round their

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Our work at base was finished with the preparation of our report to Headquarters. Riddle awaited us in Dibra; and, although it was past midnight when we had done with writing, it was settled that Maclean and I should leave next day on our reconnaissance of the Black Drin valley. The sky was clear when we retired to sleep, but just before dawn a gale blew up from the south, and with the day a deluge of rain and hail broke on our camp. In less than an hour our sleeping and eating quarters were turned into a sea of mud; mules and men slithered on the hillside; our makeshift tents collapsed; our kit was soaked; and for a time it even seemed impossible to light a fire and brew a hot drink. About midday the storm at last subsided into a steady downpour, and, leaving Smiley and Hare paddling disconsolately in the mud, we moved down through the clouds towards the Mati valley. With us went John Hibberdine, on his way to join Neel and our mission in the extreme north of Albania.

The march was irksome, for the wind blew cold and the paths were slippery. The day turned fine, however, as we crossed the valley, and we saw the sun set just before we reached the house of our friend Yussuf Bey Chelai, whose hospitality we sought for the night. Although nominally a Zogist, Yussuf Bey was known to be in touch with the Partisans, not indeed from ideological conviction, but because his former blood enemies, the Allemanis, were already deeply committed to Abas Kupi's cause. That evening he spoke of the growing danger of civil war and said that it would not long be possible for a man in his position to avoid taking sides. His concern was genuine; for, unlike most Albanians, Yussuf Bey preferred the arts and pleasures of peace to the stratagems of war, and spent his time in reading and in entertaining his friends. There was, indeed, an almost Persian delicacy about his hospitality; and he called me next morning with a glass of hot, sweetened milk and a rose!

We left Yussuf Bey's house early and climbed northwards over the shoulder of the great Mount Allemani, hoping to reach the neighbourhood of Peshkopi that night. The path led up a sheltered gully in the side of the mountain, and at

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574 the head of it we found an old man with his two sons tending a flock of sheep. It was midday, and so we broke our journey [609] to accept their profferred hospitality of sheep's milk and pancakes dipped in honey. The old shepherd was not the least surprised to learn that we were British officers, but became very excited when he discovered that we had just come from Cairo. It then appeared that he had fought in the Ottoman army in the Tripolitanian war and had escaped to Egypt after the defeat of the Turks. There he had become a bodyguard to King Fuad and had served that Prince for fifteen years, both before and after his accession to the throne. He was overjoyed at the chance of practising his few words of Arabic and of reminiscing about the Egyptian leaders of his time; and it was only with difficulty that we restrained him from killing a sheep in our honour. Presently we rose to leave, and the old man shouldered his rifle to speed us on our way. The Albanian code of hospitality requires that the host should accompany his guests for an hour on their road to protect them against attack. In practice the full formality is usually abridged, but our shepherd friend was so genuinely anxious to express his goodwill that he guided us for the next seven hours of the march down to the main road leading to Dibra. There he bade us farewell in Arabic, and with great dignity declined our tactful offers of remuneration. By good fortune, however, I still had with me a box of Egyptian cigarettes and a few Egyptian piastres, which he gladly accepted as a souvenir of our meeting.

We had seen two cars on the road in the early afternoon, but there was now no sign of traffic. We therefore marched boldly along it, rejoicing in its even surface and in its breadth, which allowed us to walk two or more abreast and so to talk in comfort. Just before the light failed we came to a place where the road curved sharply eastwards along the face of a cliff. There, for the first time, we caught sight of the Black Drin, winding through the plain of Dibra. Two hours later, after a march which had lasted altogether twelve hours, we reached the house of Aziz Dino Hoja, a granite keep four stories high, situated only a few yards from the river. There Riddle was waiting.

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rem's open hostility. Their aim was to keep Muharrem neutral; ours was now to bring him back into the war.

We left Riddle's base on the 29th of May, and, just before sunset, climbed on to the range that forms the eastern wall of the Drin gorges. The powerful river lay two thousand feet below us, narrowly compressed between smooth black cliffs, through which its deep and swirling waters ran a vivid blue, stained by the copper deposits in the rock. Beyond the jagged peaks of Liuma towered into the sky, and, with the approach of darkness, the scene became awe-inspiring, almost Wagnerian. We followed a narrow path scratched in the face of the cliff above the river, and now and then passed little stone cairns beside it. Each marked a grave and guarded the bones of some traveller who had fallen to his blood enemy, lying in wait. The dead were buried where they had been killed; for the path was too steep and the way too long to bring their bodies home for funeral.

Night overtook us on the march, but we pressed on until we came to a cluster of buildings, surrounded by a high crenellated wall. This was Muharrem's castle. Our guards called out and beat upon the gates, and, after an exchange of shouts with shadowy figures on the battlements, we were admitted to a wide courtyard. In front of us was a stone building, founded on a rock, and on the steps leading up to it stood the lord of Liuma, with a bodyguard beside him holding a torch of blazing pinewood. He bowed to us, introducing himself as Bairaktar, and led the way indoors to a room furnished with tables and upholstered chairs, the first I had seen in Albania. There we sat down for the customary exchange of greetings; and presently coffee was brought.

Muharrem was of stocky build, dressed in a plain grey uniform with a lumberjack's leather cap on his head. He looked not unlike Kaiser Wilhelm, with the same iron grey hair and moustache, loose mouth, and small piercing eyes. When at rest there was an almost abnormal concentration in his gaze, and sometimes a sly smile would cross his face, as if prompted by his inward thoughts. He was reserved of speech

[British liaison officers -- Analyst]

[Muharrem Bairaktar, chieftain of Liuma clan -- Analyst]

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and his delivery rapid and jerky. In his years of exile he had acquired a working knowledge of French and German; and, though the limitations of his vocabulary were only matched by his Olympian disregard of syntax, we were delighted to avoid the boredom of badly interpreted conversation. The evening meal was served towards midnight in a separate dining-room, and was distinguished by excellent Turkish dishes and a coarse red wine, pressed from the Liuman vineyards. At table we were waited on by Muharrem's two sons, who stood guard behind our chairs while we ate. Both were grown men, but treated their father with almost servile respect.

Next morning Muharrem laid before us an ambitious plan for raising the Gheg tribes against the Germans. This was set out in the form of a memorandum addressed to the British Government, and contained an interesting analysis of the Balkan situation, as well as detailed proposals for the organisation and strategy of a resistance movement. Appended to it was an estimate of the military supplies that would be needed to equip and maintain the tribes. Muharrem's general argument was that the useful military operations of the L.N.C. were becoming increasingly subordinated to their questionable political aims. The interests, therefore, of Albania and of Great Britain required the promotion of an Albanian Nationalist movement, which would attack the Germans with greater zeal than was shown by the L.N.C., and would seek to take over political power in the hour of victory. He, Muharrem, was prepared to undertake the leadership of such a movement if we would provide him with the necessary arms and sinews of war.

We insensibly eroded this bold and visionary scheme until, after two hours' discussion, Muharrem agreed to our more modest proposal. This was that he should organise and lead the resistance movement in the valley of the Black Drin. He declined, however, to accept our thesis that no supplies could be sent to him before he had attacked the enemy, and remarked with some plausibility:

"I have fought against the Italians, and I intend to fight against the Germans. If you will send me arms I will fight

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and while it was made ready were entertained by two old men who sang to us the strident epics of the highlands, accompanied on the one-stringed *guzla*. We climbed on after we had eaten, but the path now wound ever steeper through the woods and we lost our way several times in the moonless night. Climbing was hot work, but we lit fires wherever we halted, for at that height the night air was still bitterly cold. At last, just before dawn, we crawled over the crest of the range and came out on to a broad and undulating stretch of moorland. We continued marching till the sun had warmed the morning and then dropped asleep in the bracken, where we lay till the afternoon.

We resumed our journey in the evening and an hour after dark reached the tall stone keep of Mehmet Ali, the *Bairaktar* of Hass. There our strength was revived with lashings of a potent *raki*; and, while the meal was made ready, our hunger was stayed by *mese* of eggs and cheese. Mehmet Ali was an old-fashioned tribal chief, a cheery fellow, and an excellent host. He was reputed the most prudent man in all Albania and had persistently refused to disclose the name of the friend who had sheltered him in the Balkan wars thirty years before.

"You never know," he would say, "when I may need to hide with his family again!"

Towards midnight the sudden barking of the watch-dogs warned us that strangers were at the gate. Mehmet Ali went out to meet them and presently returned, ushering two men into the room. The first of these was Said Kryeziu, a sub-machine-gun slung across his shoulder and two hand-grenades dangling from his belt. Prison had left its mark on him, and his face was thin and drawn. He shook hands gravely with the assembled company and was just murmuring some formal greeting to me when a flash of recognition crossed his face and we fell into each other's arms. He had received no word that I was in Albania, and now this sudden reunion in the mountains seemed to both of us like a good omen. Perhaps we were at last to fulfil the work we had begun together in Belgrade.

Said brought us the best news we had heard since landing in Albania. His brother, Gani, had just fought an engagement with the Germans, the third in recent weeks. At last we had

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down, feeling distinctly out of place amid these comfortable surroundings, with our unkempt hair, dirty uniforms, and heavy boots.

Ihsan Bey was still in his early thirties, a well-built and rather studious-looking man, dressed in a grey flannel suit with a white shirt open at the neck. He had studied in Vienna, and indeed might well have been an Austrian country gentleman from his small talk, the cut of his clothes, and the slightly German turn of his English sentences. An attentive host, he plied us in quick succession with tea, coffee, and a very potent *raki*, while we explained the purpose of our visit. Then, seeing that we were tired, he led us to our bedrooms, where clean pyjamas had been laid out. For the first time in months we slept between linen sheets and forgot the fatigues of the march in the delights of a spring mattress. It was after midday when we awoke to the comforts of modern lavatories and hot, scented baths; superfluous luxuries for a guerilla, but doubly welcome for their strangeness.

In the morning, while we still slept, Ihsan had driven into Tirana on our business. He returned about two o'clock, accompanied by Nureddin Bey Vlora, the friend of Count Carlo Frasso, our host at Brindisi, and by a younger man with a charming, French-speaking wife. Nureddin Bey was a son of the Ottoman Grand Vizier, Ferid Pasha, and a nephew of Ismail Kemal, the founder of the first Albanian Republic. A great landowner in the region of Valona, he had been condemned to death, though later pardoned, for his part in the Fieri revolution against King Zog, and had long been one of the most influential supporters of the Republican Party. He was too great a patriot and too proud to "collaborate" with either the Italians or the Germans, but his counsels weighed heavily with the political leaders in Tirana, and especially with the Republican chiefs of the Balli Kombetar.

Still in his forties, Nureddin was fit-looking, debonair, and very much a man of the world. He was dressed in a smart white suit and might just have stepped out of the casino at Mentone or the Mohammed Ali Club in Cairo. His English

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hour's ride, came on a group of Zogists taking up position on a low hill commanding one of the main tracks along the valley. Their commander was our old friend, Yussuf Bey Chelai, once the protector of the Mati Partisans, but now turned against them by their unprovoked invasion of the valley. Maclean with some difficulty repressed his professional urge to correct the siting of their one machine-gun, but the Chelai clansmen showed little sign of enthusiasm; and Yussuf Bey was plainly grieved that we should meet under such circumstances.

"This fighting between Albanians is bad," he told us, "but we must defend our homes, for these men come as robbers, not as guests."

Despite the approach of battle Yussuf Bey did not forget the laws of hospitality; and while we talked together one of his men brought a pitcher of water and a basket of mulberries for our refreshment. We were touched by his courtesy, but soon took leave of him; for we did not wish to become involved in a fight with the Partisans.

We pressed on, passing several groups of armed Zogists on the way, until about noon we reached the ford across the Mati. We could now hear the sound of shooting from the direction of the Chelai territory but, judging that it was still some distance off, halted and enjoyed a second bathe. An hour's march beyond the river brought us to the village of Gurre Madhe, at the foot of the mountains. There we stopped for the midday meal and sent out spies to watch the course of the battle. Spóradic rifle and machine-gun fire continued throughout the afternoon, and at length our spies returned to report that the Partisans were not more than half an hour away. Their strength was generally put at between one and two thousand men, and we were told that the quantity and quality of their equipment had excited the wonder and envy of the men of Mati. As yet there had been no serious engagement; for the defenders were but a few hundred strong, and only sought to delay the invasion while the main Zogist forces concentrated around Burrel.

We now climbed into the mountains on the last stage of the journey to our base. The light was beginning to fail but,

10: Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EG1 Albania EG1

At meal times a cat took up a vantage point under the dining-table, to filch what it could. It was never caressed or deliberately fed; the whole Balkans believed that either indulgence would stop it from catching mice.

A man and his wife, with one or two small children, might live in this house. Of a kind hardly paralleled in the Balkans, except in the poorer parts of southern Greece, it was not common in Albania as a permanent dwelling. As soon as its master could scrape together the necessary money, he added a sitting-room. As he provided all the labour himself and needed to hire only one professional, a stone-mason who, like all his brethren in the Balkans, was also a carpenter, ten pounds sterling were enough. The sitting-room might be built on top of the kitchen (*shtëpi* or *shpi*, lit. 'house', from Lat. *hospitium*) or against one of its walls. It had a wooden floor, a chimney at one end, a window or two, a niche in the wall beside the hearth for the utensils for making coffee, and a few wooden pegs near the door on which to hang up rifles; it might also have a ceiling. It generally had a separate entrance, for sitting-rooms were men's apartments and Catholic, Moslem, and Orthodox Albanians all segregated their young women. The Catholics and Orthodox attributed this custom to plain jealousy, and the Moslems, less convincingly, to a desire to obey their Prophet's order. In the evening and when not at work outside during the daytime, the master of the house with his men guests reclined, ate and smoked in the sitting-room, while his wife and children remained in the draughty kitchen. But the men were less comfortable than might have been expected. Since Albanian chimneys seldom drew, acrid fumes from the wood fire filled the room and almost made them weep unmanly tears. But not quite, for if they succumbed, they would be derided as 'poor sticks' who 'would never see to shoot'.

Guests, in the form of family friends or strangers 'sent by God', often came for a night. Because there were no inns in the Albanian countryside except on the long-distance tracks used by pack-horses, it was the rule that a benighted stranger might claim supper and shelter till the morning from any house he saw. The hospitality was never refused or charged for, but travellers of standing were expected to give a sum proportionate not to the hospitality offered but to their supposed wealth.

As soon as the children in a two-roomed house grew up, its master must build again. His daughters went forth to live in their

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to keep the structure rigid. When a light roof thatched with straw or more boughs had been nailed on and the inner walls had been plastered with mud, the hut was ready for occupation. Quickly built and costing only the price of the nails, it was often larger and more comfortable than the sitting-room in the adjacent house. A folk-tradition says it was long the handsomest dwelling to which any country Albanian aspired. At lower altitudes in Shpat the huts were flimsier as befitted the milder climate. They were usually made of reeds plastered with cow-dung, which was sufficient to keep out the wind.

Three houses of more splendid type, each containing about forty souls, exist at Dibër—Hysni Dema's at Homesh, Murat Kaloshi's at Kandër, and Cen Elezi's at Sllovë. The owners were rich and most hospitable Moslem notables. As some of the older generation were schooled in Constantinople, they complemented their culture and their position by building establishments of Turkish inspiration, with separate blocks of buildings for the men's apartments (Tk. *selamlik*), stables, granaries, storehouses, kitchens and women's apartments (Tk. *haremlik*). These are all enclosed within a high stone wall with defensive turrets at every weak point, especially near the one and only gateway. The women's apartments are really only a series of bedrooms, one for each married man and his wife and children, and the women, for want of a common sitting-room, sit normally in the kitchen like their poorer sisters. Softer mattresses, richer floor-rugs, and fireplaces in the bedrooms indicate the family's wealth, but European beds, tables and chairs are still barred, partly to avoid rousing envy in more backward neighbours. Cen Elezi's sitting-room was a magnificent oblong, warmed by a log-fire in a huge chimney at the far end from the door and softly lit on both its long sides by a row of short windows at the top of the tall walls; enemies outside had as usual to be prevented from shooting through the outer windows, and the men inside must not be able to look through the inner ones at the women's apartments. In this room a hundred travellers supped and slept every night, going their separate ways at dawn; a chef, working in a kitchen of his own and slaughtering a couple of sheep or an ox per night, provided the unvarying menu of soup, boiled meat, bread and rice pilaff. In their retired kitchen the women catered for themselves and the children, when there was no overflow from the chef's.

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railing at him, threatened to make him set up a separate home, which would reduce both him and her to a lower level of comfort. Custom, it is true, under the stress of hard necessity, sanctioned his working alongside her in the fields, but only on condition that he did not indulge in unnecessary or frivolous conversation with her. The only explanation which Albanians offered of these restrictions was that a husband and a wife felt 'ashamed' in each other's presence. The same feeling existed all over the Balkans until they came under strong western influences a generation ago. Before that every decorous peasant bride, whatever her race or religion, refrained for several years after her marriage from speaking at all to her husband in public and spoke to him in whispers only in private, meanwhile keeping her eyes modestly downcast. This behaviour seems to originate in an idea which is prevalent throughout the Near East. The Greeks say that since only the celibate life is really holy, the matrimonial state is one of sin and therefore of shame. In I Cor. vii, 8, St Paul voiced it when he wrote, 'I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I'. Moslems, too, believe this, in spite of many being polygamists. There is, for instance, a married as well as a celibate branch of the Bektashi Order of dervishes, but it has so few supporters that at the central monastery at Haci Bektas in the heart of Asia Minor its headquarters are little more than a poverty-stricken excrescence on the enormous, wealthy headquarters of the celibates, and in Albania it has only the monastery at Qesarakë in the south-east, compared with the seventy maintained for the celibates in different parts of the country.

Now the Unwritten Law of Albania ordained that every married woman had the right to visit her own relatives at least once a year. Since these frequently lived in a different village, she could not travel to or from them without an escort, which neither custom nor the law allowed her husband to provide in person. Since brothers were everywhere allowed to talk to each other's wives, no difficulty arose in a communal household, where any man except the husband could accompany a wife to her parents' home and fetch her back. In a house with only one man matters were more complicated. If his mother were alive and physically fit for the journey, she might go with his wife, but who would then cook his supper and prepare his bed for the night? If his mother were dead

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or incapacitated, one of his wife's relatives must come for her and bring her back, but that meant the extra trouble of letting them know that she was coming.

Each member of a household had a personal name. Though this was usually determined by the religion professed, Moslem first names were not uncommon among the Catholics. The usual cause seems to have been no more than a personal whim. Thus the junior bajraktar ('standard-bearer')[1] of Shalë, a Catholic, was called Avdi because his father was very friendly with a Moslem of that name at the time of his birth. Another interesting anomaly is found in the forty-three Orthodox villages of Shpat, near Elbasan, where the older men have two names, a Moslem one for public use and an Orthodox one for private. For some decades before Albania freed herself from Turkish rule these villages were pressed by the Moslems of Elbasan to abandon Christianity and, to save their faith and lives, camouflaged themselves as Moslems, giving themselves Moslem names, keeping the Ramazan fast, and so on, but evading circumcision. At intervals they fetched an Orthodox priest from Elbasan under cover of night so that in some dark stable he might marry the newly wed with Christian rites and baptize the newly born. So, to name only two examples, the apparently Moslem Tahir Baduri of Shelcan and Ymer Tullumi of Bujars are really the Christian Spiro Baduri and Vasil Tullumi. Religious persecution having ended when Albanian independence was attained, the Orthodox of Shpat shed their Moslem camouflage and gave only Christian names to their children. If Godolesh, the picturesque village north of Elbasan, had managed to hold out for only two years more against the pressure to 'turn Turk', it, too, might now still have been Christian. It failed to hold out, so that its middle-aged and young inhabitants are fanatical Moslems but the old still visit Orthodox churches in secrecy and grieve that they must lie in a Moslem grave. One sturdy old woman, who married soon after the conversion to Islam, boasted that she had had all her four sons baptized. One of them confirmed this to the author, saying he had often been told by Christian and Moslem alike that he smelt less than did other Moslems, an agreeable peculiarity which he attributed to his baptism. The Greeks too, who introduced Orthodox Christianity into Albania, subscribed to the belief that baptism takes away the smell from which all Moslems suffer.

[1] See Chapter XI.

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lenders for the want of security), and in the less-developed north she invested it in sheep, plough-oxen, or even horses which she hired out on the 'half-and-half' system. Before a woman died, she gave a little of her *pekul* to her daughters and the major part to her sons, but nothing to her husband, so making a last comment on the curiously detached relationship between them during their married life.

Except in the towns, no Albanian woman ever went into domestic service. Each worked as a girl in her father's house and then in her husband's and, though never paid any money, was assured for life of whatever board, lodging and clothes these could provide. This applied even to families of the standing of Cen Elezi in Dibër. Consequently the Unwritten Law took no cognizance of female servants. On the other hand, men servants—mainly farm workers or herdsmen—were numerous enough to have been carefully legislated for.

Though such a servant ate out of the same dish as his master and slept in the sitting-room or elsewhere in the same conditions as the young unmarried men of the family, he had always to take a back seat—in the literal sense near the door and far from the fire; and, in the metaphorical sense, effacing himself. This befitted both his youth and his status. For his status was like that of a woman. 'It is for the master to command and for the servant to obey', said the Unwritten Law. If he were a shepherd, his views on the beasts under his care commanded his master's respect, but other servants were required to keep their opinions to themselves. In areas such as Martanesh where women could not be killed in a blood feud, a servant was as safe as they were from his master's enemies. 'Kill a servant? Faugh! As well kill a woman', was the sentiment.

There was, however, another aspect to his position: since he came from another family in his master's village or from another village altogether, he was not a member of his master's household but was its guest. As such he was entitled to protection by his master against all hurt from third parties. If he were hit, the offender must pay twice, compensating him for the personal injury of the blow and his master for the affront to his guest. If he were robbed, his master latterly complained to the police, but in the old days would have shot the robber out of hand in the north, but in Martanesh and farther south, not until he saw that the servant himself was too weak to resent the injury as honour demanded. If

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power by modern governments. The value of the difference to the servant was that the more important his master, the better he himself was protected.

It is the rule in all denominations that priests may not carry arms. This is no drawback to anybody under a modern administration, but in Turkish times it meant that a priest's servant was more exposed to danger than an armed layman's. The Catholic church tried to make up for the deficiency by special legislation of which Father Gjeçov gives a full account. Thus, though a priest's servant had a certain freedom to attend to his own business, any message he carried to a house was treated as coming from the priest. Whoever molested him molested the priest, and might be fined according to the gravity of the offence but not less than ten lambs, which went, not to the servant, but to the church and tribe. Whoever killed the servant started a feud with his family only, if the servant were local, but with the whole parish if he were a stranger—here can be recognized the principle of the community's guest—and if the murderer was local, the parish burned his house and took a hundred lambs and an ox from him as fine. If labourers hired by the church were molested, the offender had to pay a fine, divisible between them and the church; the more numerous they were, the heavier the fine; on an average this amounted to ten lambs. If an offender refused to pay, the parish went in a body and took what it wanted from his sheepfold. In short, the church treated any wrong to a defenceless priest's servant as a major crime.

The retainers of great men were essentially a bodyguard, and were only maintained by men with blood feuds. Some lived at home and joined their patron for some special, and usually brief, occasion; others lived for long periods with him, constantly ready for whatever service he might ask. They occasionally received a gold piece as reward; more often they were paid in kind—by being lent money without interest for a funeral or a wedding feast, by being given grain in bad years, by having a useful word said in the ear of the authorities to extract them from some difficulty. While his own children were small, the Hereditary Captain of Mirditë had eight young relatives living permanently with him, brief holidays at home excepted. They waited at meals or carried messages to the servants with the lofty air of medieval pages of noble blood. Until exiled during the war of 1939–45, Shevqet Vërlaci, the formidable Bey of Elbasan, was guarded night and day by relays of peasants

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value or money compensation to the other. In the cases, frequent enough, where each had had his own implements before the separation, he took these with him to his new home.

Beehives too were divided on the offset or compensation system; they were seldom enough to go round the brothers. Honey was divided on a food basis, equally among old and young.

Household utensils such as spoons, milk cogs, churns, wash-tubs, pots, saucepans and all wooden and earthenware vessels were also divided equally among the brothers. After being taken out of the house they were stacked in piles, one for each brother under the direction of whoever divided the property. It was almost never possible to find an article of the same type for each brother. So an article was laid on one pile and the offset on the others. Less often, an article of which there was only one was valued and a proportionate share of its value paid by its new owner to his brothers. There was never any furniture in the sense of tables, chairs and bedsteads to divide. At most, there were reed mats and straw-stuffed cushions in the sitting-room and some wooden stools in the kitchen. The stools might be divided equally among the brothers; the other things were generally treated as part of the house and left where they were.

Certain articles in the house were not subject to division. These included the portable oven, flour-bin, tongs, shovel and kitchen-crook, which were the symbols of family life; and the mill, caddy, pot and cups forming the coffee outfit, which was the symbol of guest-friendship. The former remained in the kitchen and the latter in the sitting-room, irrespective of whether these rooms had been separated or left to one brother. Above all, it was unlucky to move the kitchen-crook; it was almost as sacred as the fire on the hearth on whose continuance depended the continuance of the family. Very occasionally, however, it was allotted like the rest of the property. Other articles were considered individual property and excluded from division on that account. These included the jack-knife, gun and revolver carried by each man (at least in the not-so-distant past), the trousseaux brought by the married women or being made by the girls, and the married women's pocket-money, wedding presents, possessions and livestock, or money lent at interest. All these continued to be the sole property of their owners. Bedding too was individual property, each brother's having been brought by his wife as part of her trousseau. If the

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592 This third person threw the token stones on this portion or that.
428 In Godolesh there was no intermediary. Each brother gave his
592 token to an elder in whom they all had confidence. As they were
777 selecting their tokens, he arranged tokens of his own on the ground, naming each aloud for the various portions of the land or house. He carefully refrained from looking at the brothers' tokens and threw them blindly one after another on his own. 'Here is the sitting-room, good luck to it. Here is the kitchen, good luck to it', he said of the house. Each brother then claimed his token and accepted his portion. With a similar phrase of good omen the elder divided the land. In Lumë there might or might not be an intermediary. The elder taking delivery of the tokens might place them himself or, if afraid he would be suspected of dishonesty, he might give them to another man to do so. Well-omened phrases were used, such as 'The luck of this stone lies there and of this twig here'. In the Malësi e Madhe the elder said which portion the bits of stick each represented, then drew them, as would be done in England. Here the procedure seems influenced by the European education of the priests.

[77]

623 The commonest fee for an elder dividing property between
428 brothers was two or three napoleons, but it might be as low as one or as high as ten. Everything depended on how much the brothers quarrelled over the division, and how hard they struggled against yielding one to the other. In Perlat the elder made a distinction between rich and poor, asking a sheep from a rich family but only a kilo of coffee from a poor one. In Mirditë he had the right to a sheep and a money fee as well; the latter was as agreed. In Lumë 'it does not do to have an elder without a sheep'. Wherever, as in Godolesh, officials arranged the separation, no fees were charged.

408 Everywhere one meal at least of meat and rice pilaff must be
574 given to whoever came from outside the family to separate the brothers. If these had no flocks, they must buy meat from someone who had. The expense of these meals, which was heavy for people so poor, was shared by all the brothers, the animals being taken out of the common stock before it was divided and the money for the rice, coffee and, if necessary, meat out of the common purse before the settling up of accounts. These meals were the first charge on the family property.

All stages of the division were watched by neighbours. Before the persons negotiating the separation sat down to the final meal,

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they reminded these onlookers how everything had been divided. Then if disputes arose later between the brothers these could bear witness to the division. No documents were drawn up, the oral testimony of the witnesses in general, and in particular the mute testimony of the boundary stones, was enough for the unwritten law. Where a dead father had held title-deeds, these were distributed appropriately among the brothers, but such cases were few.

Too often, the division was followed there and then by disputes. Most frequently they were about the land and due to greed, for each brother knew that on the portion allotted to him on that day he and perhaps unborn generations of his descendants must live, and he naturally tried to make it as large as possible. Sometimes a brother was rightly disgruntled. Dividers were human enough to make mistakes; an eldest brother sometimes tried to cheat when dividing; at times even an elder showed favouritism. In such cases the division was revised, an elder dividing instead of the eldest brother or a second elder instead of the first, on the usual 'elder after elder' basis. Or instead of having one elder between them the brothers might each put in one for himself; in this case they must all stand aside and leave the elders to fight things out.

Not infrequently one brother was simply cantankerous. Then the easiest way for the elders to make him see reason was to exercise their right to have all their meals at the family's expense until their work was done. They might go away, leaving the division incomplete and refusing to return until he bent his stubborn neck and in person fetched them back with promises to be good. This meant an extra meal, an expense that even the trouble-maker deplored in his heart, if not openly. As it was, surely unfairly, shared by the reasonable brothers these were from the first careful to do nothing to excite the other further. There was no difficulty about extracting this meal, as the commonest source of trouble, the land, was always divided before the livestock.

A story of Turkish times from Godolesh shows the elders taking cruder but no less effective steps to settle matters. A family at the top of the village refused to accept the division they proposed. 'Where is your best ram?' asked the elders the first day, and ate the animal. 'Where is the pot of *bekmès* (boiled grape juice)?' they asked the second day, and emptied this. 'Where is the butter jar?' they asked the third day, and devoured that. The brothers then came to their senses and allowed the suggested division to proceed.

1 [concerning the division of land at the time of separation of brothers--Analyst]

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231 If a dog was unusually fierce, it might be tied up early and loosed late. If a locality was dangerous or if the dog's master was at feud with someone, the dog might be loosed precisely at sundown and left free till exactly sunrise. As a result of the latter proviso a stranger who reached a village about sunset must ask immediately in the interest of his own safety whether his intended host is at feud with anyone. If he were, he called to his host from a safe distance —the fiercest dog did not stir unprovoked beyond the outskirts of its own farmyard. There followed an exchange of conventional questions and answers, designed to convince the host that the stranger came as a friend and not as an enemy. When convinced, the host bade the stranger stay where he was and forbade him to speak—this in case the dog charged in the direction of the voice. He then tied up the dog while some of his womenfolk went to inspect the stranger, and if satisfied that he was harmless, to bring him to the house.

231 When a house dog attacked a stranger the law considered three 683 positions: (*a*) when the dog only threatened to bite, (*b*) when it 628 succeeded in biting and (*c*) when it killed. In all three positions there was discrimination between attack by day and attack by night.

If during the daytime a house dog threatened to bite a stranger, the latter might kill it without incurring a penalty. The day was his time not the dog's, and he was in the right and the dog in the wrong. To attack him it must have broken its chain or pulled up the stake to which it had been tied. Its master too was at fault for not having observed that its chain and stake were insecure. Exceptionally in Martanesh the stranger was fined 100 grosh.

If again during the daytime a house dog succeeded in biting a stranger its master must indemnify the stranger, and that irrespective of whether the dog had been killed or not. In Dibër he escaped by paying the blood money due for wounding a man. In the more picturesque north he must keep the wounded man in his house free of charge until he recovered, pay any doctor's bills that might be incurred and pay the wounded man what he would have earned if well. The northerners were so poor that they found such expenses a heavy burden. In consequence they tested a dog's chain and stake from time to time and sent their womenfolk to escort a stranger to and from the house; they could not perform this task themselves because they did not enjoy a woman's immunity from attack by a lurking enemy. A poor man, desperate

complained against him to the elders, and he was fined ten grosh in Turkish and two gold francs in modern times. In Turkish times a strong man often forced his way through and only a weak man cowed by the guns levelled at him, turned back. The principle of private ownership was carried so far in this village that it extended even to a certain garden road which was not blind but had an exit as well as an entrance. This was reserved for the villagers of one ward, and forbidden to their animals, to the rest of the village and to 'foreigners', with one exception. If a girl from another ward or village had married into the privileged ward her kinsmen had leave to use the forbidden path when on their way to visit her. If even one man in the ward objected, however, he had the right to veto their passage. It is not known how this unusual privilege came into being. The most obvious explanation would be that the families in the ward descended from a common male ancestor, but, in fact, the families were of very mixed descent.

In the extreme north the individual's safety on certain inter-tribal thoroughfares was ensured by what was called the 'truce of sheep and shepherd', because it mainly concerned shepherds and their flocks. Actually travellers and public messengers also enjoyed its protection. Two or more tribes, meeting in full assembly of all their bajraktars, heads, and youth, swore a solemn truce to attacks on life and property on a given route or routes within their territory, and guaranteed its observance. They prescribed the limits of the road which it covered, regulated the behaviour of persons taking advantage of it, and enunciated penalties for breaking it. Thus, a shepherd could lead his flock and graze it only within a prescribed limit. A traveller or public messenger journeying from one of the contracting tribes to another had both going and coming to keep within the points fixed. As soon as he had set foot in the foreign tribe's territory he had to go straight to the bajraktar's house and not turn aside to any other. He must not venture out alone but must always be accompanied by the bajraktar or a guide of his providing. So long as shepherd, traveller or public messenger obeyed these rules and kept to the prescribed road, he was regarded as a public guest and consequently was guaranteed public protection and, what was almost more important, public vengeance in the event of being murdered or robbed. Protection came from the knowledge of the penalties which the foreign tribe would exact for any harm done him. If he were murdered the price of his blood

[*in the village of Godolesh --Analyst]

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574 628 486 672 was 22 purses instead of the usual 12. If the murderer was slow to pay up, the tribe enforced payment. In addition, they burned down three of the *kulla* (houses of two or more storeys) in the murderer's compound. If he did not possess so many, they burned his own *kullë* and two belonging to his nearest relatives. If between them they did not have so many, the tribe searched among his more distant relatives until they found the required number, going back a hundred generations if need be. They also destroyed his property—crops, livestock and the rest—so thoroughly that nothing of it remained. The same penalties were inflicted on a thief who stole sheep travelling or grazing within the protected area. On the other hand, if a traveller, public messenger or shepherd broke the conditions of the truce, straying, for example, from the prescribed path, he was no longer counted a public guest and lost his right to public protection and vengeance. He was still a private guest however. The last man in whose house he stayed before his mishap was bound to kill his murderer or to punish the man who robbed him.

This truce of sheep and shepherd has now died out. At the end of Turkish times it was already confined to the Gjakovë group of tribes in the extreme north-east, such as Nikaj, Mertur, Gash and Krasniq. But Father Gjeçov found traditions of its existence in the Dukagjin tribes of Shalë, Shosh, Kir, Gjâj and Toplanë, and also in Puke, Mirditë, Kthellë, Kurbìn and the mountains of Lesh. Father Gjeçov considers the custom to be so old that it dates from days 'before thin-necks began to vomit flame', that is to say, before firearms were invented.

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693 of coffee if he were poor, a sheep if he were rich. Farther south, the fee varied with the elder's importance and the bargain he made beforehand. In Martanesh it was ordinarily one Turkish pound, but Selim Peshku accepted this only in easy cases; he asked, and was gladly given, three or even five in more complicated cases. Cen Elezi of Dibër asked in 1938 twelve napoleons from each of two cousins who were quarrelling about a boundary. Two elders employed in a dispute were usually paid alike, each disputant paying half the total. But when each disputant bargained separately with his elder, one elder might be paid more than the other. Even where fees were conventionally fixed as in Lumë, an elder often bargained for a larger one. An elder who came from a distance was naturally paid more, as he had to spend at least one night and two days away from home. An average fee in Shkrel for such cases was one napoleon, whereas for cases near at hand it was a silver Turkish dollar in Turkish times or 10–20 koronë in 1932. Almost always an elder was given a sheep in addition; 'an elder without a sheep doesn't do', it was said. Elders could not exact prepayment; it was evidently felt by the old law-givers that if prepaid they might be tempted to default on the work. At the same time they had to be protected from the litigant who tried to default on their fee. A litigant had, therefore, to deposit a rifle or a silver watch or a silver tobacco box or the like at the outset of the case as a pledge that he would pay the fee at the end of the case. Judgement pronounced, he paid the fee and was given back his pledge. Because of this arrangement elders were called 'pledge elders' when they undertook work involving a fee.

693 In addition to his fee and sheep an elder also expected at least
[574] one meal for himself and his party. It had to be of the highest
[262] class, with meat and rice pilaff, and the meat had to be goat, ewe or ram, more rarely beef and never that inferior thing, chicken. When the elder's party was small, the sheep-breeders of the north gave *mazë*, a delicious dish compounded of butter, cheese and maize flour. In Kosovë the meal was generally taken from the richer disputant so as to save the poorer litigant expense, or from the one who had insisted on calling in elders. In Martanesh it was taken from the one who had caused the trouble. In Shalë, on the contrary, each elder ate at his own client's expense except in road cases, where both elders and their suites ate at the expense of the litigant in fault. In Zerqan, if the case dragged on so long that the

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promise—if they did, there would be no shooting. Each had to give this guarantor a pledge of the usual type—rifle, revolver, watch—which was laid before the elders. The elders then delivered their judgement, the two disputants accepted it and had their pledges returned. If a disputant broke his promise and shot his rival, the village Council of Elders would fine the guarantor, asking him why he had let the man break his word. In this way, through the medium of the guarantor a good deal of pressure was brought to bear on the loser to make him keep the peace. In the Elbasan area it was agreed that a disputant who gave a meal to the elders thereby accepted their judgement, so that the strong instincts of hospitality came into play. In Mirditë the elders whose decision was flouted bade the disputants 'go to Shupal (St Paul's Church) or the Grykë e Oroshit (Defile of Orosh)', i.e. bring the matter up before the next General Assembly for the tribe at one or other of these famous meeting-places. If the loser would not abide by the decision of the General Assembly he could be fined by the tribe, ostracized or even banished for a period. Occasionally a strong man subjected to such sanctions killed the offending elder; by so doing he involved himself in yet another blood feud. In Mirditë and adjacent areas emphasis was laid on the fact that the recusant loser had himself chosen and approved the offending elder, and had signified the same by giving him a pledge. By these acts he had stripped himself of the right to take back the pledge or to express active disapproval of the judgement given. Only in the event of the judgement's being demonstrably biased or unfair were the disputants allowed to challenge it. 'A crooked judgement can be annulled', the law stated. Often the crookedness was established by the loser going secretly to ask another elder for his opinion. In that event the disputant had everywhere the right to appeal against the judgement and to call for a new examination of the case by another elder or pair of elders. In some parts, the law ruled that 'the law does not admit of elder on elder, and trial on trial', and that a man who had 'chosen and approved' elders had no right to call in others.

Frivolous changing of elders was restrained by the extra expense this entailed. In Lumë, for instance, if two brothers were displeased by the manner in which their chosen elders were dividing their property, they could call in one more elder, a *staraplak* (ancient), whose decision was final. But his regulation fee was five

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fail to turn up. If even one so failed, the suspect was declared guilty. Indeed, the easiest and least obnoxious way of convicting the suspect was not to turn up for the oath. Such was the almost universal rule. In the Malësi e Madhe, however, a message was sent to a missing compurgator to make sure that he had not merely forgotten the date. If he replied that he had not come on purpose because he thought the suspect was guilty, the case ended, a verdict of guilty being returned. If he replied that he was absent for personal reasons, an attempt was made to find two others to take his place at once; if this succeeded, the oath was taken. If only one compurgator did not attend in Bytyç, the oath could be taken, particularly if the reason for the compurgator's default was the newly discovered pregnancy of his wife. These rules applied only to the accuser's quota. If one of the suspect's compurgators failed to turn up, any bystander who could be persuaded to join the jury might be substituted. As the suspect was not bound to disclose the names of his quota, the public was often unaware that the second man was a substitute and not the suspect's first choice.

In Mirditë the verdict was virtually known before the taking of the oath. When the suspect felt ready to take the oath he invited the compurgators to a meal in his house. If they declined his invitation it meant that they thought him guilty and would not take the oath. If they accepted his invitation he could sleep in peace, secure in the knowledge that whenever the time came for them to take the oath, they would do so. Once they had eaten his food, the oath was as good as taken. This custom may have developed because the suspect had to assemble the compurgators to hear him take the oath and was forbidden by his instincts of hospitality to leave them unfed. In Labinot, Çermenikë and Zerqan, the suspect also offered the compurgators a high-class meal, with meat and rice pilaff, but not till after they had taken the oath, and only if he had been cleared. The meal was thought to ratify the oath and to reward the compurgators in some measure for their trouble.

A loser who did not abide by the verdict of the oath lost 'face'. Some years ago, a family in Fulqet died out. Two neighbours, more or less related to the family, claimed its land, one taking possession of it and the other gathering a stackful of hay from it. Even the women quarrelled so fiercely over it that they had to be separated by gendarmes and the elders intervened and said that the relative in possession must take an oath with twenty-four

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beaten by her husband, and no matter how severe the punishment, her brother, who was her natural protector, would be too ashamed of her conduct to interfere. If a thieving woman did not mend her ways, her husband usually divorced her. The southern Catholics, anxious to reform erring wives and to avoid divorce, sometimes sent wrongdoers to spend a night in the lonely church of Shen Ndue in the forest above the village of Laç in Kurbin. This treatment is said to have been effective in many cases!

By the laws of hospitality, a man never robbed his guest nor a guest his host. If a third party robbed either, the other did his best to find the thief and the stolen goods. But such laws were not always respected, and penalties were prescribed for their breach. In Mirditë a guest who stole was ostracized as well as having to pay the usual penalty. In Kurbin he was expelled for ever from the tribe. If a guest in Mirditë was robbed by a fellow-guest, their host demanded double redress from the criminal—for the injury to his guest and for housebreaking. If a guest was robbed after leaving his host's house, it was still the host's duty to punish the thief, as the latter would know where the victim had been.

[1] [i.e. the Albanian wife, as recorded during the reign of King Zog --Analyst]

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loss of face. At Krujë in 1930 when the authorities sought to punish a man who had murdered his brother during a quarrel, the widow swore that the pistol had gone off accidentally when her brother-in-law was trying to wrest it from her husband, who had threatened suicide. Having thus prevented the authorities from taking action, the widow made no effort to keep the true story of the murder quiet, but repeated it every day during the month when the women met for the ceremonial 'keening'. She was also openly commended by the public for preventing the government from shaming her husband's family by arresting the murderer.

Exceptionally, if the murderer's motive was bad by tribal standards, his relative was well avenged. For instance, if a man killed his cousin or nephew to get his land, the crime was considered so anti-social that the murderer was killed by the community, his blood was lost, and his family expelled. Again, exceptionally, a motive might be so good by tribal standards as to win the murderer public admiration. Thus children in Shalë were taught with great pride that once a tribesman killed his brother for killing a guest, for an Albanian's duty to his guest transcends the claims of blood relationship.

Two modifications of the general rule are to be noted. In Mirditë in spite of the victim's blood being lost, the murderer had to pay the tribe the fine due in cases of ordinary murder, 100 rams and an ox. In the Malësi e Madhe if the two brothers had separated the fratricide had to pay blood money to his brother's dependants. If the widow had no children, she took all the money; if she had a daughter only, she again took it all, for when the time came for the girl to marry, she would as 'head of the family' have to pay the wedding expenses; if she had a son, he took all the money, for his father's death had made him head of the family. The blood money was therefore alimony payable to the widow and orphans who had been robbed of their breadwinner. If the two brothers had not separated, the fratricide as a matter of course supported the widow and orphans along with the other members of his household and the question of alimony did not arise.

Parricide was thought the most abhorrent of all murders within the family. In a sense a father had the right to kill his son without being asked by anybody what he had done, but a son unnatural enough to kill his father could surely not have been got by that father, but must be a bastard. Even where his crime was regarded

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units. For twenty-four hours after a murder in Lumë, a district peopled by little groups of kinsmen, any man of the victim's kin might avenge him on any man of the criminal's kin. So long as members of this group survived no other would move. If they were killed off, other groups, beginning with the nearest neighbours, might seek vengeance. Within living memory this licence found dreadful expression in Theth, the beautiful northern part of Shalë. About 1890 a man who lost a lamb promised to give a cartridge to a shepherd if he found it. When the shepherd succeeded, the man went back on his promise saying he would 'give him five'(*sc.* fingers on the trigger) instead. For the moment the shepherd let the matter drop, but later met the man and asked once more for his promised reward. Again the man refused it, not too courteously, and was immediately killed by the incensed shepherd. Unfortunately, it was Easter Sunday and the murder took place in a meadow where all the men of Theth were gathered for the festival. Immediately the dead man's *vllazni* (brotherhood), comprising all the males descended from the same ancestor, sought vengeance on the murderer's brotherhood. These were not backward in replying, and within an hour fourteen men lay dead for the sake of one cartridge.

Whole tribes might be affected by the rule of 'boiling blood'. In the Malësi e Madhe if a Kastrati tribesman killed a Koplik man, any member of the latter tribe had licence for 24 hours to kill any man from Kastrati. The murderer was, therefore, bound to announce his crime at once so that his fellow-tribesmen might take cover. The time limit elapsed, vengeance lay as usual between the two households. In such cases of inter-tribal aggression each tribe became temporarily a single family in which each member represented the whole.

In Çermenikë, kinsfolk were sometimes fused into one family not by boiling blood as described above, but by a particularly atrocious murder such as that of a guest by his host, when 'circle after circle' was the rule. The guest's 'circle', consisting of his own household, his kinsmen in separate homes, his neighbours and the sons of the married daughters of his family, wherever these last might live, tried to kill the murderer, and failing to find him or other members of his household, they might kill one of his 'circle'. On succeeding, they held that they had avenged their relative's death, and their victim's family agreed. In other districts they

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would have found themselves involved in a new feud with the household of the man they had killed, but by the local rule of 'circle after circle' he died as proxy for the real criminal and no new feud entered into the question. There seems to have been no time limit to their extended vengeance.

National solidarity was recognized in the debatable border lands where Slav and Albanian lived side by side. If an Albanian was killed by a Slav, any Albanian would kill any Slav in revenge. The crime, it was felt, had pitted the Albanian family against the Slav family. This national sentiment was so strong that though there has never been any love lost between Gegs (north Albanians) and Tosks (south Albanians), no Geg would allow a Slav to kill a Tosk without seeking in return to kill any Slav he could find. The less warlike Tosks did not feel a similar impulse. If one of their number or a Geg were killed by their Bulgarian or Greek neighbours, they left vengeance to the victim's family.

The community also acted as a single family when certain public servants were killed. If the victim were a Roman Catholic priest, he might lawfully be avenged by his parish, the tribe in which the parish lay, and his own family. If action were taken by the parish or tribe, the matter ended. The avenger's act closed the feud, and, fearing no retribution, he could hang up his rifle. If the priest's family afterwards killed another of the murderer's men, they began a new feud. Generally the family did not wait for the parish or the tribe to act. When a Mohammedan or an Orthodox priest was killed, it fell to his relatives to avenge the crime; the feeling that sacrilege had been committed was too slight to drive their parishioners into action.

If a field-guard of Lumë were killed, he was publicly avenged. If the murderer was from another village, any of the field-guard's fellow villagers could lawfully kill any man from the murderer's village during the first twenty-four hours, and afterwards he could kill the murderer or any other man in his household. In either case he could hang up his rifle. If the field-guard were killed by a fellow-villager, the village expelled the murderer. On the other hand, if a miller were killed, vengeance rested with his family; the village could not act. A field-guard was a public necessity; without his services the village economy would suffer, and he must be given public protection. A miller had taken up his work for the sake of private gain and was not a public necessity; if he were not at the

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626 daughter could not marry into a 'good' family and his son must
*628 marry a 'bad' girl. As far south as Godolesh on the outskirts of
558 Elbasan, he paid visits at his peril; his coffee cup was only half-filled, and before being handed to him it was passed under the host's left arm, or even his left leg, to remind him of his disgrace. He was often mocked openly.

All over north Albania it was permissible for the victim's kin to burn down the murderer's house. The veteran Mirash Nue of
●[574] Vuksan in Shalë boasted that once he saved his house from this fate by sending a message to the avenger which ran: 'Spare the ashes on my hearth for the sake of the open house I've kept.' The avenger, touched by the reminder of Mirash's noted hospitality, yielded to the plea. In 1935 a Dibran took to the mountains after wounding a fellow-villager with whom he was at feud; on recovering, his victim did not dare to sleep at home in case he returned under cover of darkness to repair his bad marksmanship by setting fire to the house and burning him to death. In hot blood an avenger might in some places do as much material damage as possible to the murderer, burning his hay as well as his house, scything his ripening grain and harrowing over his growing maize. For fear of reprisals in kind he could nowhere harm his children or animals.

685 Burning down a murderer's house is said in Martanesh to have
*628 been a recent innovation, and in Dibër and Lumë to have been formerly much more common than in recent times. Various considerations suggest that the latter view is correct. The reason given in Lumë for the waning of the custom is that it grew progressively more serious as people abandoned the straw huts in which they once lived and built themselves stone houses; the huts were cheap and easy to rebuild, but the houses were not so easily replaced. With poverty as general and murder as frequent as they used to be, it is obvious that if burning the murderer's stone house and destroying his crops had been freely permitted, the life of the tribe could not have gone on. To restrict the attacks on property, sanctions were introduced. In Dibër an avenger guilty of incendiarism was banished in perpetuity by the community. In Krujë the crime was deprecated as doubly unwise; it might cause further deaths, so involving the avenger in further feuds, and women and children might be among the victims, in which case the avenger would be covered with disgrace. In Shpat an avenger who burned his enemy's house found the whole community against him as

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of losing his protégé, but even so he had to be fairly 'strong'. In Mat such a friend might take the murderer out three times with impunity. Afterwards he was sure to receive a message from the avenger which ran, 'Don't stir out again. Stay indoors. It was for your sake that I didn't fire.'

In the majority of cases the murderer neither ran away nor was shut up, but went about his normal business, taking certain precautions. An Albanian never despised his enemy; the strongest man will say, 'I am stronger than he is, but a rifle doesn't care for bravery, a rifle kills'. He remembers also that an enemy is ever on the watch: 'A wooden stake rots, but an enemy doesn't.' Yet another saying—this from west Mat—'Wood rots, a wrong doesn't'. 'A feud can't be forgotten.' 'A man with an enemy is like a hare sitting on its form, he must watch all the time.'

The first precaution a hunted man had to take at home was never to answer the door himself.

Since the laws of hospitality were rigid and seldom transgressed, a guest seldom killed, or was killed by, his host. Frok Gjeta of Kthellë, however, had lost his father at a guest's hands; three men had called and been unsuspectingly admitted; the old man was hospitably making coffee when they suddenly opened fire and killed him.

About 1910 some men called at a house in Orenjë, in Çermenikë, and were admitted by its widowed mistress as guests. They seized the only adult male in the house, her stripling son and, hanging him head downwards by a rope slung across a rafter, demanded money and avowed that they were avenging the murder of one of their kin by the family. The son said he had no money; the mother screamed that she had a little, but they hanged her son.

Another precaution commonly taken by a 'wanted' man was to live in a house of more than one storey. Such a house never had more than slits for windows in the ground floor and those in the upper room were square holes without glass, across which stone shutters were drawn at night. In Çermenikë the outside staircase that led down to the stables on the ground floor was always fenced in carefully with wood. For greater security the women lived on the ground floor protecting the men who lived above. If a man were rich enough, he built a high wall round the house; this gave him the freedom of his courtyard. In this case all the windows looked inwards on the court; the outer walls were blank save for

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the loopholes. A still richer man, or one with many enemies, had several doors in his courtyard wall and watch-towers at strategic points. (The turrets at each corner and in the middle of the long walls effectually commanded these entrances, and many loopholes in the walls provided space for many defenders to shoot from.) Shevqet Bey Verlaci of Elbasan had several posterns in his garden wall, each commanded by a watch-tower and each providing him in case of need with a possible means of escape.

Incidentally, back entrances in the mountains were useful for guests with enemies. These could enter unseen by other guests, among whom there might be one or more who would inform the enemy of his whereabouts, and so endanger his life. They were also useful if the master had sent a group of his followers to shoot his enemy; if they failed, they could creep in unseen by the guests; in case of failure on such an errand, they did not wish the attempt to be known.

A wanted man who wished to work in his fields might station a child herding goats or a woman minding a cow at a vantage point where an enemy could be detected and the watcher give him warning, so that he might seize his rifle and defend himself. As the enemy's trump card was surprise, he was likely to retreat when detected. Before the wanted man left the house the women and children would look through the windows to make sure no enemy was near. A man with blood on his hands might wish to go to the forest to cut firewood, a place too distant for his women to keep watch. In that case he might send a scout ahead to reconnoitre the road, and himself follow rifle in hand. In Zdrâjshë, Çermenikë, the communal hay-field was so far away that a wanted man made no attempt to go and cut his hay; the others, however, gave him his due share, though he had done nothing to earn it. A man who, in spite of risks, kept moving about might never stir outside, especially at night, without his rifle. He never told where he was going and travelled by an unlikely route and at unwonted times.

In the summer of 1935, to return from Tirana, whither he had been officially summoned, Murat Kaloshi of Dibër sent out an attendant to find a car willing to drive at once to Dibër, and within five minutes of its drawing up at the door of his lodging started. This was at 2 p.m., an hour when Tirana is plunged in sleep on a summer afternoon. He supped at the wayside inn of Lunik, an insignificant village without telegraphic communication, four or

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five hours from Tirana, travelled on through the night, and in the early morning as the car neared Peshkopi, he got out and walked home across country. (With him were a number of attendants armed to the teeth.)

Needless to say, such a man never announced beforehand the time of his departure, if his intention to depart could not be concealed.

An obvious precaution was never to stir outside the house. When a Dibër notable went to Tirana, he took at least six armed attendants along with him, who might or might not live with him permanently. The armed attendants of the Hereditary Captain of Mirditë were mainly young relatives of his who spent years with him, at once his clansmen and his relatives; their loyalty was beyond doubt. The bodyguard of Shevqet Bey Verlaci of Elbasan were generally peasants from his farms who had been long in his service. Less rich men who needed numerous attendants on their walks abroad drew them from their neighbours. Selman Nus Cohu, for instance, an attendant of the bajraktar of Lurë, lived at home and only joined the bajraktar when he or another member of his family needed him for a journey or some other cause. When Miftar Selmani of Lumë came to Tirana he brought a posse of armed neighbours who constantly changed as their services were required at home; some came with him for the outing, others out of bounden duty to requite the help he had given them in earlier times.

Men still poorer contented themselves with reinforcing the men of the household with a single permanent retainer. Such a man was the peasant from Shëngjerg who fled to Namid Çallaku of Fulqet after committing three murders, and in return for his board and an occasional tip protected his protector. In Mat it was also customary to go and stay for a month at a time with a friend who had need of an extra gun.

Failing armed attendants, a hunted man was not without protectors on his journey. In districts where women were immune a woman's company, on a journey as at work, was sufficient. When Shalë as a tribe was in blood with its neighbour, Mertur, a man from Shalë could safely go to Mertur with a woman born in Shalë or another tribe who was married in Mertur, for she counted as belonging to Mertur and the man was therefore her guest. On the other hand, a daughter of Mertur who was married in another tribe

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was no protection, for she had lost her Mertur nationality as it were by her marriage, and so her company did not in itself make the traveller a guest of that tribe. In Mat it was a protection to have a foreigner in front of you, for a foreigner was as sacred as a woman. This held for most districts of Albania.

The principle of the guest's sacrosanctity was often invoked. If a guest of an important man in Dibër had an enemy and was travelling alone, his host would give him an attendant when he left. This attendant must see him safely to his next destination; should any harm befall him on the way his powerful host would avenge him. The protection, and with it the obligation, of his host ended by nightfall, for he would by then have either reached home or become the guest of another man. His journey being thus limited to a day's duration, the mere fact of his being accompanied by the attendant would generally suffice to keep him safe, for within the radius of a day's journey, on foot, everybody knew everybody else, and on his being seen in the company of the attendant, it was at once recognized whose guest he had been and who his avenger would be.

There were interesting extensions of the principle. It was not necessary to have been actually a guest of the strong man for him to avenge the traveller's murder; it was sufficient to say one was about to be his guest. In the time of Lan Kaloshi, one of the Alijes on his discharge from detention as a hostage by the Turks was on his way to stay with the Lleshaj of Kander when he was killed by the powerful Ali Doçi. Although he had not actually become the guest of the Lleshaj, it fell to that family to avenge him. They, however, realizing that they were no match for Ali Doçi, told the family that the only way in which the murder could be avenged would be to declare that the victim had been on his way to visit Lan Kaloshi. They did this. Lan accepted the responsibility, and avenged the murder.

In Shalë a traveller, no matter whether native or stranger, could travel safely provided he called out some native's name in a loud voice. Scattered though the population of that mountainous valley might be, there was always some goatherd or cowherd within hail to report on whom the traveller had called; in case of need, that involuntary protector recognized that the man was travelling under his protection and took whatever steps were necessary.

It sometimes happened that a hunted man, when paying a visit

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to a friend, found his enemy was his fellow-guest. This was natural enough, for especially where both belonged to the same village, hunter and hunted always had a number of mutual friends. All over Albania the two enemies, being fellow-guests, did not molest each other, but rather, out of courtesy to their host, talked together as if nothing divided them. In the old days they would in Çermenikë even shoot at a target together without turning their rifles on each other. In Çermenikë the hunted man's immunity was not quite complete, varying according to his behaviour. If he cocked his fez to one side and held his head high, his enemy might kill him even at their common host's in his exasperation at his effrontery. If, on the other hand, the murderer pushed his fez straight to the back of his head and kept his head down, his enemy would almost certainly not touch him till both had left the house. Sometimes hunter and hunted were invited to the same wedding or funeral feast. Then the same rules of courtesy came into play. The enemies sat at one table, ate out of the common dish, passed each other their tobacco boxes and drank coffee side by side. If toasts were drunk among the Highlanders, they would not drink to each other's health nor would they willingly address each other, but otherwise they gave little sign of their enmity.

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from place to place. In Shpat the original criminal must take the initiative and go to his enemy's house, escorted for safety's sake by at least one friend. The enemy came to meet him in the open air, but did not offer him his hand, for a man reserves his hand for his friends. Then both went into the house, the coffee, the all-essential to a peace-making, was soon served, followed perhaps by a meal with meat. Both coffee and meal were 'like a funeral', enlivened by next to no conversation and with little cordiality of mien. A day or two later the enemy must go to the original criminal's house, and the same ceremonies were gone through. Alternate visits had to be paid for some time, until at last the original enemy declared that he had forgiven the other. A marriage very often cemented the peace-making. Occasionally the attempt to make peace broke down—one's gorge rose at the idea of making friends with the murderer. Then the whole evil story began again, murder alternating with murder.

The ceremonies in Çermenikë and Martanesh followed much the same lines. New elements were introduced farther north, for example, in Krasniqë. Accompanied by six to eight men, the man originally at fault, with his hands tied behind his back, went unexpectedly on a festive evening to his enemy's house. The host, as in duty bound, said, 'Come in!' and invited them to sit down. They refused to do so until in sign of forgiveness he untied his enemy's hands. He never refused, for he said, 'Better forgive, and forget one dead man than quarrel with ten living ones'. If he had not granted their request, the murderer's escort would never have visited his house again. That night the uninvited guest ate a meal at the involuntary host's house, and the next day the man forgiven carried them all off to his house, where he provided a meal with meat pasty and sweets. Forgiveness in Krasniqë was more easily obtained for a murder done in hot blood, and the ensuing friendship was more genuine; if the murderer had ambushed his enemy, peace was more difficult to establish and the resultant friendship less real. In Lumë the murderer was thrust into his enemy's house before dawn so that his enemy might not see him coming; no notice of his coming was given beforehand. If the host did not untie his hands, the friends who accompanied him refused to drink coffee; the host always yielded to the threat of this disgrace.

In Kurbin peace was made by the same methods as in Lumë and Krasniqë. The murderer, who had the sailor collar of his jacket

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[Laws enacted in Kastrat and Bajzë on Nov. 1, 1892]

Whoever brings pigs or sheep to Shpellë will be fined 50 grosh. [681]
Whoever washes clothes at Shpellë will be fined 50 grosh.[1] [231]

21. A man who leaves his sureties to pay his debt is to pay a fine of 225 grosh to his creditor and 150 grosh to the chiefs and 5 rams. [296]

VI. Supplement dated 1894.

(From Father Gjeçov, *Kanùn*, pp. 124–5.)

1. Whoever takes a woman to live with him without marrying her or runs off with a married woman or a girl shall pay 1000 grosh to the Church, 500 grosh to the chiefs and 10 rams. [837]

2. Whoever tears his face in mourning and lamentation for the dead, shall pay 1000 grosh to the Church, 1000 grosh to the chiefs and 10 rams. [765]

3. Whoever does not permit the chiefs and fine-collectors to carry out a tribal law will be fined 500 grosh and 5 rams. [696]

4. Whoever commits a murder during a truce or after the feud has been compounded will be fined 6 purses and 10 rams. [628]

5. Whoever fires a rifle in a house where there is a wedding shall, whether he be a guest or the master of the house, pay 500 grosh and 5 rams. [585]

The same fine shall be paid by whoever annoys another with abuse at table whether at a dinner or a wedding.

6. Whoever acts contrary to these laws, whether he be chief, fine-collector, or commoner, shall pay 3000 grosh. [554]

Brahim Beg *serxherde*
Kasem Beg *bylikbash*
Dodë Prençi bajraktar
Zenel Shebani
Gjokë Doda
Keq Prela
Zef Gjeka
Prelë Toma
Gjelosh Nika
Vukusa' Leka
Brahim Vuksani

[In front of each of these names there is a Turkish seal.]

VII. Solemn Pledge for Flock and Shepherd in Nikaj and Shalë, St Prende's Day 1894.

(From Father Gjeçov, *Kanùn*, pp. 119–20.)

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1. As regards roads it has been enacted as follows:
From the fountain in Faqe to the crucifix in Brazhdë the road is

[1] (Note by Father Gjeçov: Shpellë is the place where Bajzë and district take water.)

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[Solemn Pledge for Flock + Shepherd in Nikaj + Shalë, St. Prende's Day, 1894]

[681] solemnly pledged to safety for whoever goes to spend the night in Nikaj
[491] or Shalë. If any tribesman of Shalë who goes along this road is killed
[594] by a tribesman of Nikaj, the guest of all Shalë is killed, from dawn of day till the fall of night. If any tribesman of Nikaj who goes along this road is killed by a tribesman of Shalë, the guest of all Nikaj is killed, from the dawn of day till fall of night.

Between the same points the road is safe for Shosh and Mertur and is under the protection of Nikaj and Shalë. If a tribesman of Shosh kills a tribesman of Mertur he kills the guest of Shalë; if a tribesman of Mertur kills a tribesman of Shosh, he kills a guest of Nikaj.

[495] Whoever resorts to violence on this road must make an oath with twelve men taking the oath and twelve standing by.[1]

[283] 2. A flock and its shepherd are not to be killed by anyone; their safety is solemnly pledged and guaranteed. Any man who kills them must pay 20 purses or be killed and have his life equated to theirs.

3. If the pledge of safety is broken and a tribesman of one tribe kills during the period of pledge and guarantee and a tribesman of the other tribe does not so kill, twenty-four men of the tribe that had a man killed must take oath saying, 'You killed me when guaranteed'.

4. The whole road to Curraj up to the Krue i Ftofët (Cold Spring) is under a pledge of safety.

5. Mowers and reapers with scythe and sickle are under a pledge of safety in both summer and winter pasturages.

[313] Cutters of pine slivers and timber are under a perpetual pledge of safety.

[204] Shooters are under a pledge of safety from St Nicholas's Day in summer (May 9th) to St Nicholas's Day in winter (December 6th).

[312] A man irrigating during the night is under a pledge of safety.

6. A house with hearth and flour-bin and the keep of a house are not under a pledge of safety.

[231] Sheepfolds are under a pledge of safety.

7. If anyone goes out from the keep or the house in order to go to the sheepfold which is under a pledge of safety he must say, 'Look, man, we're going to the animals (or the fold), which are under a pledge of safety.'

[562] 8. As for women in Shkodër and Gjakovë:

If any of them wants herself to run away or to behave badly for the fun of it, good luck to her.

[1] (Note by Father Gjeçov: It was the custom in Dukagjin to make half, not all, of the jurors take an oath. If twenty-four jurors are ordered, twelve go and lay their hand on the Gospel and the other twelve stand listening with folded hands. In many mountain districts unless the principal person concerned excuses someone, it is the custom of all the jurors to go and lay their hand on the Gospel while repeating the words of the oath.)

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[Laws Enacted by the Tribe of Kurbin, Aug. 5-7, 1906]

8. As for jurors, in every crime committed in Kurbin, a murder excepted, the jurors must give their oath, saying, 'That it has been stolen from you, I don't know'.[1] [681] [695]

9. What an informant says is said with an oath of how it was in mind.[2]

10. If a man quarrels deliberately with another and without informing the village elder, he will be fined 500 grosh.

If he informs the village elder and the latter asks for a pledge of good behaviour from the one who is oppressing the other and this man refuses to give it, he will be fined 500 grosh.

If the village elder cannot put things right he gives both men a month's grace and informs the other elders who shall settle the quarrel in accordance with the local law.

11. Anyone who gives food or admittance to his house to a Christian or a Mohammedan who is a policeman in the service of the Sultan shall be fined 1500 grosh. [625] [574]

12. If a man breaks a pledge of security given and taken in the presence of elders and commoners in Kurbin, the elders and commoners are under an obligation to burn his house and to expel him from the tribe. [696]

Written in Delbinisht, Kurbin, at the spring of water under the mulberry tree near the Archbishop's palace on August 5th, 6th and 7th, 1906.

Gjin Pjetër Mark Pervizi of Skuraj, Kurbin, senior elder among the 45 elders of the environs of Krue, in the name of the elders and commoners.

Also present at this General Assembly and registrars of the aforesaid laws:

Mgr. Nikollë Kaçorri, witness.

Father Shtjefën K. Gjeçov, Franciscan, witness.

XII. Letter from Shalë dated May 12th, 1907.

(From Father Gjeçov, *Kanùn*, p. 127.)

1. Greetings from the bajraktar of Shalë, the notables and youth to you, chiefs and youth of Theth. We beg to inform you that the undermentioned laws have been enacted by the tribe of Lower Shalë. We let you know, asking if you too will abide by these laws. We laid down the

[1] The Italian version of clause 8 runs: *Il dorere del giurato per tutto ciò che accada nel territorio di Kurbini, salvo che nelle cause di uccisione, consiste nel giuramento di non cognoscere il colpevole.*

[2] The Italian translator has *La deposizione del delatore deve essere accompagnata dal giuramento.*

2:Edmonds T-3 (1926?) 1927 E13 Balkan Peoples
Albania E61

485 not over-particular, a shower bath, with the aid of a bucket, was possible.

As usual, the boy was the power behind the machine. He it was who made the beds, swept out the rooms, and supplied the milk, the coffee, the yaghourt, or whatever you might happen to want. He never took his clothes off (some day, I imagine, when he has grown to a certain size, he will burst out like a butterfly from its chrysalis and a new suit will become an imperative necessity), nor did the youth who sometimes shared his labours. The two of them slept together on the landing not only fully clad but beneath a pile of rugs and blankets, while I, in the bedroom next door, [291] though wearing only pyjamas, could hardly bear the weight of the single rezai. But the Albanian is insensible to heat, and even in the height of summer continues to wear his heavy homespun clothing and a vast waistband wound many times around his stomach.

Osman, my host, took a fatherly interest in my proceedings. He often came into my room and stood watching me while I wrote on the typewriter or made a drawing. On • [574] these occasions he would roll a cigarette and present it to me wet from his tongue—a customary offering in this part of 000 the world which, of course, you must not refuse. As an art critic he was more well-meaning than discriminating. One day, I remember, I happened to finish a picture when he was in the room and gave it to him to look at. He turned it upside down, held it at arm's length, and, with his head on one side in the manner of the real connoisseur, exclaimed,

2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1
Montenegrins EF5

Every inhabitant had two names: a Christian name, under cover of which he refused military service; and a Moslem one, under which he refused to pay poll-tax. Constantine Suliman declared the plan worked admirably, and his tribe was practically independent. Pressed by my Christian interpreter, who was grieved at the absence of any religion, our host said that when a priest occasionally visited the place he was allowed to baptize all children that had meanwhile been born. A 553 702 651 A 852 771

It was a fit spot for seeing, for the first time, the soothsaying of ancient days. A 574

The two armed men sent with me as escort gorged the meal, and grinned affably at the heads of tribesmen which now and then bobbed up from behind bushes to peep at us.

Then Constantine Suliman picked up the fowl's breast-bone and held it against the sun. He carefully traced all the lines made by the marrow, and said gravely: "One of us five will die within a fortnight." All took it very seriously, except my interpreter, who was an employé of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and said it was very wrong to read bones, but was uneasy. He and I survived the fortnight. I have always hoped that Constantine Suliman was not the one—if any—who was shot. I saw him last, against the sky, waving dignified farewells to us, and remember him as the man who had lived eighty years and never seen peace, but had kept his honour clean according to his lights—and which of us can say more? A 787

All through the North Albanian mountains I found the reading of bones common and greatly believed in. In times of danger and political tension the primitive rite in wild surroundings was sometimes strangely dramatic.

In Montenegro, too, the custom was common. I saw the bones read there in October 1912, just before Montenegro declared war and set the war-ball rolling which has not yet quite stopped. Battalions of up-country Montenegrins were pouring into Podgoritza and camping near the barracks. I wandered among them. An old man a-squat on the ground with some comrades was hungrily devouring some food they had brought with them. He raised a well-picked mutton bladebone against the autumn sun and stared and stared. I waited, and he cried out despairingly. His comrades jeered. But the old man turned to me and said: "I see blood everywhere—much blood." The younger men said it must be Turkish blood and were cheerful. But the old grey-head had seen war before they were born and was uncomforted. Sadly he told me he feared it meant evil, and I left him staring into the bone in vain search of hope. He read, indeed, but too truly. The war of 1912, into which Montenegro rushed with such hope of greatness and glory, was the beginning of the end of Montenegro. M 787 M 781

2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1
Montenegrins EF5
Serbs EF6

as not the schoolmaster picked up each sheet to examine as I finished it. How many times, when hoarse and exhausted, I have howled the "British Grenadiers," or some such ditty, only to have it rapturously encored!

In return I was crammed with food and drink.

One should never look a gift-horse in the mouth; but the suspicion with which a stranger is received, the endless questions that must be answered, and finally the lavish hospitality when it is decided to admit him, recall the fact that among primitive people it is necessary to propitiate the stranger, lest, offended, he should work evil to the house. By eating under the roof he acquires a temporary membership of the family. In the Albanian mountains, and, indeed, in the towns, I have been given hospitality with the words, "Buk i kryp i zemer i em" ("Bread and salt and my heart").

In Montenegro, rakia was the universal symbol of hospitality. When, after weeks of showing off my "parlour tricks," we returned to Krsto's house at Njegushi, he was triumphant. He confessed he had had grave doubts as to the propriety of a warrior going round the country as servant to a woman. But, managed in his manner, the tour had been a great success. I had, he said, made an excellent impression, and on one point only had offended. If he might say so, it was thought improper for an unmarried woman to imitate the manners of the officers. Greatly surprised, I asked what military action I had performed. He explained that in Montenegro all modest women blew their noses "like this"—here he performed loudly upon his own, with his fingers—whereas the officers who had been trained abroad used a handkerchief, and so my doing so was thought decidedly "fast." I conformed carefully to many a local custom, but in spite of Krsto's request I drew the line at "the finger trick."

Upon the journey he repeatedly affirmed that I had not come to search for treasure. At Pirlitor upon Durmitor, the legendary site of the castle of Voyvoda Momchilo, the belief in treasure was very strong. The local headmen followed me about the alleged ruins, though by nothing short of magic could I have moved the great stones. I purposely dropped my heavy pocket-knife, and the clank of metal on stone brought them up swiftly with the cry: "Has she found it?"

In Serbia, where I travelled without a guide, for I was raw to the Balkans at that time, I found the stranger taboo very strong. As I was ignorant of their politics, I merely thought they were crazy when they dogged me perpetually and went my way. When the powers in Belgrade ascertained, by means of countless cipher telegrams, that I was really a British subject and not a Karageorgevitch in disguise, as they had been foolish enough to suppose, then suddenly the hospitality phase

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

including boots and shoes of yellow leather embroidered with gold, together with a loaf of sugar, some coffee, and other customary trifles. The *dunti* is carried by two boys belonging to the bridegroom's family, both of whose parents must be living. As they arrive at the house the women and girls sing a song beginning :

> O flaxen one, far whiter
> Than foam on Drin's wave-crest,
> —— sends to thee the *dunti*,
> All in a golden chest.

All the members of the family receive the boys at the foot of the staircase with every mark of respect, and conduct them to the reception-room. As the *dunti* is placed on a coffer, all present cry, "*Per heir*" (Good luck !) The envoys are seated in the place of honour, while all the family of the bride remain standing; refreshments, consisting of liqueurs and bonbons, are served twice, complimentary speeches are exchanged, and after about an hour of polite attentions, the boys depart. On the same day a youth is despatched by the bridegroom's parents to invite the guests for the following Monday. The formula he makes use of is—"So-and-so is to be married, and begs you to come next Monday to the wedding with all your family, or, if you prefer it, let the head of the family come alone." At each house he receives in return for his invitation a present of a few piastres. The number of persons invited by each family is fixed according to the degree of kinship or friendship existing between them and the bridegroom's family.

The bride's family send out their invitations in the

485 with cooking privileges at the fireplace, while the host brews coffee for sale, and also dispenses *raki*. After his guests are in for the night he locks the door, and cannot ordinarily be persuaded to unlock it before morning, no matter how urgent the needs of the guests to go outside. This precaution is necessary owing to the frequency of violence.

Some of the *hanjis* are local men. Others come from Kruja, the home of innkeepers. All of them live as bachelors. This system, like the *kiragi* business, brings a certain number of outsiders into the country. All in all there are probably 12 to 18 *hans* in Ghegnia, in addition to the one European-style hotel at
• 574 Peshkopia. The Catholics do not use this system; in their tribal areas guests are put up by important individuals through a system of re-
[628] ciprocal hospitality. Since local feuds are usually more prevalent in Catholic than in Moslem country, travel across the former is relatively light.

438 There remains only the question of trade, which has been partly covered.[1] On the whole it may be said of the mountain Ghegs that they live by a regional, or geographic, and perhaps also ethnic, division of labor. The ordinary man is a farmer, who produces firewood, cereals, legumes, tobacco, wool, milk products, and sometimes wooden spoons. His wife produces cloth, crocheted stockings, embroidered scarfs, baskets, eggs, and a few other local products. These mountain products find their way to the market towns. Usually men and women come together; sometimes only the women make the trip, and sometimes the whole family stays at home, sending the goods by a *kiragi*.[2]

The Ghegs are able to export these things because they produce a slight surplus of agricultural products. One reason for the surplus may be that they use a number of labor-saving devices, including fulling and mealing mills run by water power.[3] This gives them more time for other pursuits, but does not increase their complexity of relations at home, since the mills are small and serve individual groups of related families.

1 [See cat 116, pp. 20a -20b -- Analyst]
2 [See cat 116 pp 20a -20b Analyst]
3 [See cat 116 pp 17b - 18a -- Analyst]

342 the above single-room house; thus there are now two doors in the house, corresponding to the internal, in fact only theorical, division of the room (1) (fig. 64). The floor consists of well beaten earth.

In later years, this internal division of the room was materielised by the erection of a real wall dividing the room into two serarate [354] spaces. In some areas, this dividing wall runs parallel to the long side of the house; two dwellings are thus formed, each having a separate fireplace (Plate XVIII 5). But the most common division of space is that done by a transversal wall, i.e. running at right angles

Fig. 63. Houses near Dinoshi, in the area of tribe Gruda
(Nopcsa, Albanien, fig. 34)

to the main pole. This wall is always built of lighter material (woven branches or planks) than the outer walls.

[354] Of the above two rooms one contains the fireplace and it is the [574] dwelling of men and the guest-room for visitors. The other, with no fireplace, is a sort of ante-room and it is used as cellar and dwelling for women. (Plate XVIII 3).

171 The entrance is always in the ante-room, through which one 342 enters the main room where the fireplace is. This is, according to 354 Nopcsa, a difference to be noted when comparing the above house to the corresponding Serbian and Croatian, which has the fireplace in the ante-room, as we have seen. This difference is also to be noted in the tripartite Albanian house. In Jugoslav and Rumanian regions,

1) The two separate doors can also be seen as a rule in houses of the villages in Attica. See **St. Kyriakidis**, Σπίτια καὶ καλύβια τῆς Ἀττικῆς ἐν Ἡμερολ. Ὁδοιπ. Συνδέσμου, 1926, p. 67.

EF6 Serbs EF6
Albania E61
Croats EF4
Montenegrins EF5

A 562 [264] [516] women, and set on the table by a young man. The best places and softest cushions are taken by the old men as a matter of course, when they recline or sit on the floor to smoke, talk, and drink coffee. At night this room[^] is given A [574] up to the guests, who, of course, are almost always men. S Albanians are very jealous, and keep their women carefully M secluded in their own part of the house.

A 342 Montenegrins and Serbs living in this region (some of them claim that their families have dwelt there since pre-Kosovo days) build their houses in the thatched one-storeyed manner, with mud-brick walls as in Montenegro itself, copying nothing from the later Albanian fortress-houses.

XIV

C 342 [177] (7) *Houses in Dalmatia* are marked by Venetian influence, though not so strongly in the villages as in the towns, which are extremely Italianized in their building. In coast villages one generally finds quite ordinary little stone or brick cottages with thick walls and tiled roofs. Inland village houses are more distinctive. They are built of stone, with or without mortar. The roofs are tiled, and a C stone-flagged verandah and path run between the cool dark [351] house and the flower-garden, surrounded by a low stone wall. Windows are fairly large and kept open. In some of the villages in the neighbourhood of Dubrovnik a room shaped above the eaves like a huge extinguisher is used as a kitchen. Its sloping sides, twice the height of the upright walls, end above the roof in a small square chimney with a pointed cap, and are slit by one or more vent-holes. The narrow eaves almost meet the lintels of the doors and windows. In the Karst districts, farther inland, the cottages are of the barren mountain type.

XV

S 342 (8) *Shepherds' huts* are extremely simple, often like wigwams. In Serbia they are mostly made of sticks piled into the shape of a tent, with a door, the spaces between them sometimes filled with clay or sods. In the heights of

[^] [i.e., the guest-chamber.– Analyst]

11: Start E-4 (no date) 1939 EF1 Yugoslavia
Albania EG1
Serbs EF6

A 286 515 531 [574]

No. 1937-10. A guest towel given to Miss Durham by Dom Simeone, a Catholic priest of Djakova, in Albania, was woven by his sister. It is of fine cotton with wide weft stripes of coarser thread and has a few narrow silk stripes bordering the plain cloth of the ends, which are decorated with a spool-woven pattern worked in wool, dyed with aniline dyes. The colours used are a hard pink, violet, blue, dark red and emerald, and the result is somewhat harsh compared with the other examples. The design of a stiff stem with three very conventional flowers is vaguely Turkish but the little borders on either side of the main pattern, consisting of two rows of circular spots, are rather charming.

Dom Simeone's initials D.S.C. are worked in red cross-stitch.

No. 1935-35. The two last " marama " with decorated ends have some of their motives brocaded in by free spools, but also have borders worked in the tapestry manner on the warp threads, whilst the cloth is still in the loom, in the style often called Persian openwork*, which is akin to needleweaving but much finer.

The example whose number is quoted above, is of hand woven cotton material 17 inches (43·18 cm.) wide and 4 feet (1·2 m.) long, and has five Persian open-work borders in Turkey red and white at the end, divided by coarse cotton weft stripes. Above this group of narrow border patterns there are two rows of " ibriks " in red filling the angles of a chevron pattern in white which has yellow four-petalled flowers at its angles. These designs are worked in with free spools.

The five open-work borders consist of two outer ones with tiny red rectangles on a white ground and three wider ones composed of chevrons in white filled in with red triangles; the whole border measures 6½ inches (16·51 cm.) in width, and has a rich appearance.

No. 1936-57. This " marama " from Scutari is unusual on account of its size, being made of two widths of material each 13 inches (33·0 cm.) wide and measuring 7 feet (2·1 m.) in length.

It is of hand-woven cotton almost covered with broad and narrow weft stripes of a thicker thread, and the decorated borders at the ends are 7 inches (17·8 cm.) wide. The whole border consists of six narrow ones with a broader one in the centre, worked in pink, red and white, all divided from one another by groups of narrow weft stripes. The patterns are all geometrical, and based on arrangements of squares and triangles, and the six narrower ones are of Persian openwork, whilst the broader central one is brocaded with free spools.

A twisted fringe of the warp ends finishes off the whole.

A S 515 531

No. 1936-53. One of the two " maramas " for everyday use is of coarse, hand-woven cotton and has a group of Turkey red weft stripes at each end. It was bought in Prizren and used personally by Miss Durham.

286 A

No. 1936-47. The other, also of coarse, hand-woven material, has an arrangement of broad and narrow stripes of gold plate at the ends.

B. **Bedspreads.**

286 513 583 531

No. 1935-29. A gauze bed-cover from Scutari (Skodar) with warp and weft stripes in red and white, the wider red ones having a line of yellow or green down their centres, is an example from the latter end of the 19th Century, and formed part of a bride's outfit. The crossing of the pairs of red stripes with pairs of white stripes produces a gay, tartan-like effect.

* T. de Dillmont: " Encyclopedia of Needlework."